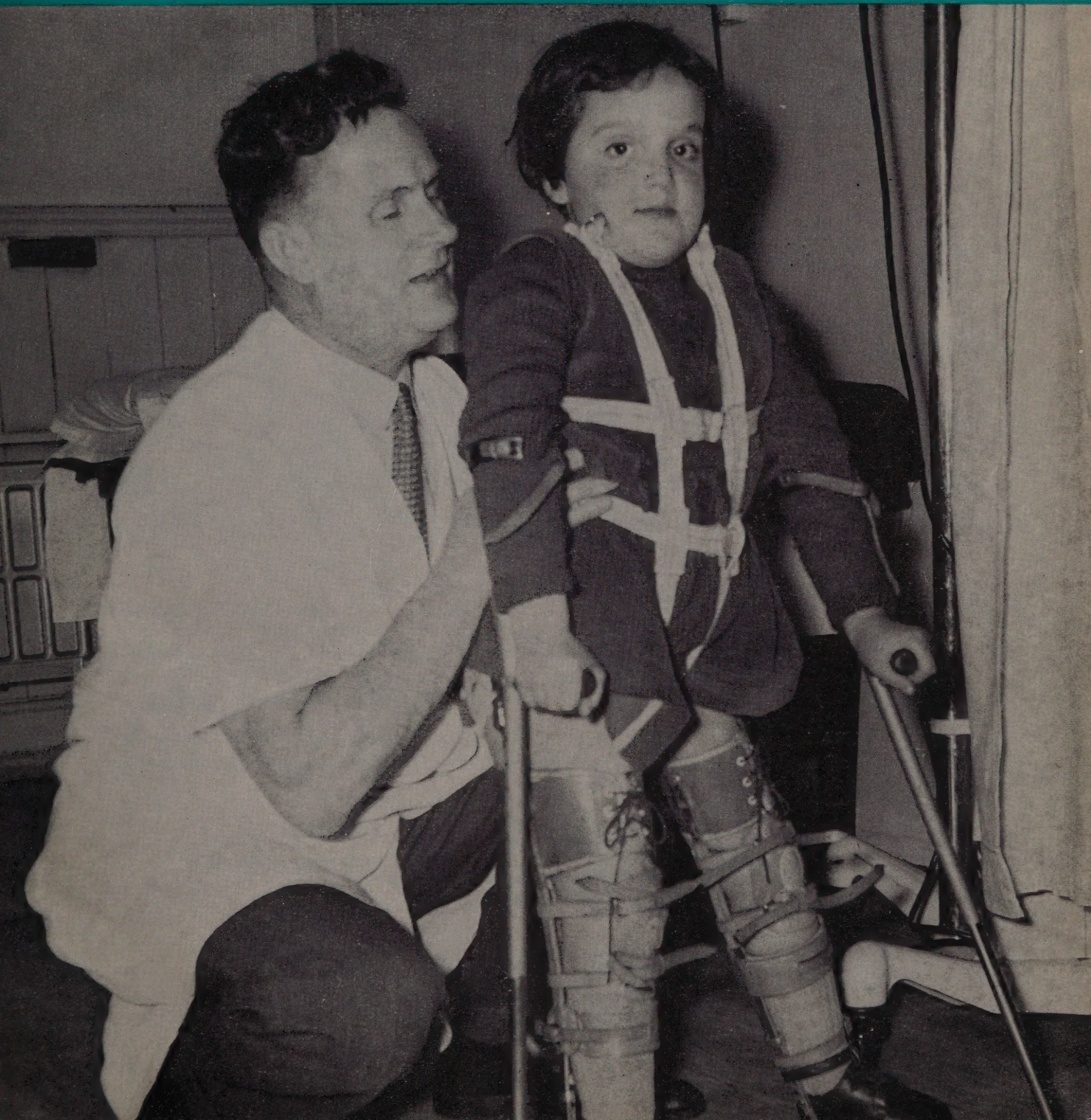


SPASTICS NEWS

JANUARY 1966 PRICE 6d THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPASTICS SOCIETY



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SPASTICS NEWS

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Front Cover Picture: (Courtesy St. Dunstons)

A war-blinded physiotherapist, who is head of a busy hospital department, helps a young spastic girl to make her first efforts to walk.

Back Cover Picture::

This enchanting picture was taken outside a sweet shop in London by an amateur photographer.

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY

12 Park Crescent, London, W.1

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Tapping Teenage Reserves of Human Kindness

by R. A. Lewis

I OUGHT to explain at once that I know nothing whatever about Charity Appeals. I know nothing about their finances or their organisation. I know a little about The Spastics Society, but not much. I know that they act for some unlucky people who are in great need of help from those more fortunate and that this morning I am surrounded by the people whose mission it is to bring them aid and comfort. But I repeat, I know very little about your operation.

But what I do know something about is our young people, our teenagers, if you can stand the word. I have studied them for more than ten years. In the horrible jargon of advertising, I have researched them in depth. I have observed them in the great industrial centres of this island, as well as in France and Italy.

Recently I have visited Germany, *Western* Germany—and how I wish I could have seen the young people of Eastern Germany—and Sweden and Norway and Holland and Belgium. I have even visited that great cultural centre, Luxembourg, whence comes the radio

(Mr. R. A. Lewis, who recently retired as managing editor of a group of teenage weeklies, one with a circulation of over 1,000,000, is one of the foremost authorities on teenage reaction. In a recent talk to Regional Officers he drew attention to a huge reservoir of human kindness in the teenage population waiting to be tapped, and indicated how this might be drawn upon the Society.)

This is a subject which is very much our concern and, as a first step towards developing action along the lines suggested we are reproducing Mr. Lewis's talk for consideration and discussion by all concerned.)

programme that is the favourite one of all here present! I spent five weeks in the United States investigating the teenager in the land where he was invented. I claim to know something about these young people.

All of you will have heard of V.S.O. It is the Voluntary Service Organisation which asks young boys and girls after leaving school or university to give up one year of their lives to some good cause somewhere in the world without payment. It might be to work in a leper colony in Central Africa, or a hospital for blind children in India, or to teach English in a school in North Borneo. The boys and girls receive their food and shelter, they are transported to and from their destination, and are given what could be called a schoolchild's pocket money. It was when he heard of the success of this superb conception that President Kennedy adapted it in the form of the famous American Peace Corps. Now V.S.O. has so fired the imagination of our young people that for every one who is accepted, thousands, and indeed perhaps tens of thousands, of volunteers fail to make the few places available.

To these it is a most bitter disappointment, to be denied the chance of being able to make this service to the community. Thousands of young hearts are daunted by this reverse every year. And here, it seems to me, is a great reservoir of idealism going to waste. Here, if you like, are great reserves of charity and mercy and unselfishness unused. And I wonder why we are not using it in some way? Indeed I have always been struck with the comparatively small contribution, so far as I know, which is made to charity by our teenagers, in all of whom, and I repeat *all*, there is this strong vein of idealism which we are leaving to atrophy and perhaps become perverted or, anyway, to wither and die.

Now some of those who are not chosen to go overseas to give their service have started their own organisation at home. It is called plainly Voluntary Service and it is mostly based on the fifth and sixth forms in the schools. They run their own railways. They visit the old people and talk to them and bring up their coal and chop their firewood and do their shopping. They baby sit. They work in the hospital wards. A thousand unobtrusive services are rendered and few people know about it, though it is going on throughout the country.

Now I was wondering whether some use might not be made of this Service for the spastics. The boys and girls run this thing themselves, without direction or regimentation, but I believe they would be responsive to the right approach on behalf of your needs. I do not say that you can ask them to go round with collecting boxes!

It is service that they prefer to offer. The financial bit could be insinuated into the movement later on if it were begun. I don't know what they could do, because that is not my job. But all I know is that here (on my left) is someone in great need of help and here (on my right) is someone with a great desire to give it. It seems to me that a liaison should be—no, *MUST* be—established.

Let me personalise the thing. I live in Hove where is your splendid unit at Hamilton House. Almost opposite on the left is the Brighton and Hove Grammar School for Boys. Round the corner on the right is the High School for Girls. An admirable situation. Are these young people being used? I think off the cuff on dances and pop concerts and sporting contests. I would have thought the girls would be the most susceptible to your approach. Because you present them here with the image of a child—a spastic child—who needs help. It is an appeal that no woman young or old, can resist.

I agree that this thing would have to grow slowly and if it ever reached national proportions—and I don't see why it shouldn't—it would necessarily be from local beginnings. I am sure it could not be planned on a big scale but would grow into it of its own spontaneous initiative.

To return to where I came in. Here we have these great reserves of human kindness largely unused and untapped. In a way, if we don't do something about it, we are all failing in our duty. I don't mean our duty particularly to this Society, but our duty to the community as a whole.

(In subsequent discussion some regional officers gave instances of how teenagers were already helping in various directions.)

This of course, only serves to underline that the potentiality exists. What the Society would like to feel is that all over the country teenagers were helping spastics and becoming allied to our cause albeit very indirectly initially.)

The Need for Occupational Therapy

by Rosemary Jenkins

Miss Jenkins' views are her own and do not, of necessity, reflect those of The Spastics Society or its advisers.

AFTER recently visiting several cerebral palsy centres and schools around London I have been surprised to find how many centres lack an occupational therapist. Possibly this is due to the lack of funds but perhaps it is because the value of the occupational therapist is not completely realised. Many people think our job consists of merely visiting wards distributing diversions such as basketry and lampshades for bored patients in bed, but our profession has progressed into much more practical channels of rehabilitation.

The whole problem of independence of the cerebrally palsied child, in the home as well as at school, needs to be fully explored by all members of the team, and it is usually found that the occupational therapist has had a training well suited to tackle the practical and domestic problems. If there is no occupational therapist at a centre these may be tackled by the physiotherapist or a teacher, neither of whom is as experienced in this particular field, and each has to give up precious time from her own important specific work to attempt to substitute for the occupational therapist's job.

The occupational therapist has had a three-year course of training in a dual qualification to work in the physical and psychiatric field of medicine. The physical experience is vital for treating the spasticity, athetosis or ataxia of a cerebrally palsied child and the training in psychology and psychiatry are put to important use when dealing with these children and their parents, who need continual help to overcome the great psychological barriers they have to face in everyday life.

Parents tend to overprotect their handicapped children and thus are slow to realise they might be capable of some independence. The occupational therapist has specialised in how much can be expected of each child both physically and psychologically—mere encouragement cannot help, in a meaningful way, the child's particular handicap.

The occupational therapist can teach a child to dress by grading the process and knowing just how much assistance to give at first. It may be said that the physiotherapist could teach a child to dress adequately but surely her time is too precious for this, when it could

be used in the neuromuscular training for which she is specifically qualified, and she rarely has had the professional training in 'Aids to Daily Living'. A housemother may be given the task of teaching a child to dress but could not do this therapeutically as she has insufficient specific medical knowledge of the child's physical disabilities.

Feeding is another problem to be overcome and here the occupational therapist and speech therapist must co-operate to find the best solution. The speech therapist teaches the child to chew, suck and swallow and the occupational therapist must find the best functional position and method of transferring the food from the plate to the mouth. If an occupational therapist supervises feeding sessions she is the most likely person to 'make' time to let the child feed himself or at least assist, since it is so much quicker and easier to completely spoon-feed the child, who will then never gain independence.

With her knowledge of carpentry learned during training the occupational therapist is a very suitable member of the team to adapt chairs to fit the cerebrally palsied child so he can sit in the best posture possible to make use of any trunk control he has gained to maximum advantage and to prevent deformities. A child may need arm-rests or foot-rests adapted for a wooden chair and a tray to play on at a correct height. Each child has his own problems and these must be overcome and be continually watched as the child grows. Potty chairs and toilet seats may be necessary for many children with insecure balance, indeed a child may not be toilet-trained by parents at home solely because he cannot relax comfortably on a small potty on the floor. The hurdle of toilet training is a great worry for many parents, and a child is often trained within a few weeks once the correctly designed chair has been used at the centre and a copy sent home with co-operation of parents and staff. Following on from this, the occupational therapist is probably the most capable person to decide the most suitable model of Ministry of Health wheelchairs and tricycles, and their adaptations for a particular child.

Many children of average or high intelligence, especially the athetoid group, cannot express themselves due to speech difficulties and lack of manual dexterity. The occupational therapist is playing a progressively important role in helping to allay this frustra-

tion and by finding a medium through which the child can be educated—through the use of electric typewriters and calculators. She can handle the child more therapeutically than a teacher could and find the best method of making use of what muscular control the child has, either using the child's hands, feet or by head control adaptations or even by remote control. Once the skill has been acquired the typewriter may be used in class under the teacher's supervision, but the teacher herself would not have the medical knowledge or the time from her class for individual attention to train the child to use the typewriter in the first place.

Perception difficulties are sometimes discovered by the educational psychologist, and with her more frequent training of the child the occupational therapist can help the psychologist in her assessment.

Apart from the activities already mentioned occupational therapy in the pure physical therapeutic sense is vital for the rehabilitation of the child. The occupational therapist can train the child to make the most use of its hands and limbs to bring the weaker hand into spontaneous use in play, rather than allow one-handedness, and train manual dexterity in clumsy athetoid or ataxic limbs. Therapeutic play can increase the active range of movement and strength and improve grip. Working in conjunction with the physiotherapist, the occupational therapist can further establish certain patterns of movement used in physiotherapy so they become more natural to the child.

The general public are now becoming more aware of the need to help cerebrally palsied children and many are contributing by donations and voluntary work to help to fight this battle together with qualified medical teams. Now the social stigma has lessened and treatment centres and schools are expanding, so the type of treatment and education must become more specialised, positive and progressive. When money is given by the country to help these children it is the responsibility of the administrators to use it to the best possible advantage, using specialised staff trained in their own important field, rather than substituting one member of staff for another. It seems the occupational therapist is the one who could do more in these centres and once given a place on the staff she will prove invaluable.

Castle Priory College — The First Year

by Joyce N. Kowles, B.A., Principal and Director of Studies

THE FIRST course offered by the Staff Training College started at the end of October 1964, before the buildings at Wallingford were ready for occupation, but following the Christmas holiday, Castle Priory College was opened. The building itself is a large Georgian house in its own grounds, and very near the centre of Wallingford. The riverside situation is not only pleasant, but lends itself to a wide variety of outdoor activities for the students, and the close proximity to the town means that they can participate in different forms of voluntary service if they so wish, or can join some of the local organisations for their recreational needs.

At present the main concentration of work has been on Houseparent training, and the first group of students will complete their course at Christmas. A new group of trainee Houseparents started in September 1965, six of these being recruited from the Society's own establishments, the remainder having other previous relevant experience. The curriculum is modelled on the lines set out by the Central Training Council in Child Care, but includes additional lectures on the nature of cerebral palsy and the practical aspects of the care involved. The main topics covered are child development and psychology, health and hygiene, first aid and elementary home nursing. Students also discuss the background of the State Social and Welfare provisions and the problems involved in residential living for both staff and residents. There are some lectures on home making, and practical sessions on leisure pursuits. Visits to both day and residential centres which undertake the care of children and handicapped adults are made as an integral part of the course. Some of the lectures are covered by the principal and tutor/organiser, but those on highly specialised topics are given by other members of the Society's staff or consultants, and lecturers from the neighbouring towns of Reading and Oxford. The course includes some 24 weeks of practical training in schools or centres, when the students have opportunities to observe all aspects of school life, and to participate in activities there, in addition to undertaking, under supervision, the care of a group of residents.

As dormitory space is limited at present, the other programmes of courses are largely confined to the periods when the houseparents are away from Wallingford on their practical assignments. Two short courses for senior

houseparents have taken place—the topics in each case emphasised the problems of hygiene in a residential establishment. It is encouraging that three of the students who participated in these courses are at present at Castle Priory as students on the main houseparent course. Two week-end courses for junior staff from local group centres were also held in the spring. Although short, these were of immediate practical value as the concentration was on elementary but important problems such as lifting, feeding and aspects of personal care. A student from one of these is also currently on the longer houseparent course.

The heads of schools visited Wallingford for one day in the spring to discuss training problems and, following the Home Office practice of giving short courses for staff with responsibilities for student training, the matrons who received students for practical periods attended a course designed to acquaint them with the background to the training schemes, and to outline possibilities for observation and working sessions.

During the summer term the main course students were again in residence, but simultaneously a week-end course for teachers of partially hearing children was arranged, Dr. Fisch and the staff of the special unit at Ingfield Manor School being the main contributors.

This autumn has seen a wider range of courses, commencing with a programme on the background to cerebral palsy for the care staff from the Nottingham Family Help Unit, and followed by a supplementary course for houseparents who already hold the Child Care or N.N.E.B. certificates. An induction course for teachers who are newly-appointed to posts in the Society's schools was held in October and a three-day course for new administrative staff from headquarters. Very recently, a short hydrotherapy course was organised, but as there is no suitable pool near Wallingford, the participants visited Colwall Court to allow for some practical sessions.

The college has also housed a week-end conference or senior speech therapists, and a two-day meeting of the wardens from adult centres. The houseparents are in Wallingford again until Christmas for the next part of their theoretical training, and thus the programme for the second year is already upon us.

In one or two of the courses there has been

a mingling of staffs from different types of establishments—national schools and local centres—adult centre staff with those used to working with younger children, and, by the running of courses simultaneously, staff from different disciplines have been able to meet in an informal setting. Where there have been vacancies, a few places have been offered to staff from non-Society establishments, and these inclusions have strengthened local contacts. In this way, the college is beginning to achieve its two-fold purpose—that is on the one hand to train the Society's existing staff, and on the other, to spread the knowledge already gained by the Society for the benefit of spastics in other areas of care and education.

All introductory courses contain something of the history and achievements of the Society, and an outline of its present organisation and current developments. For those working in comparative isolation it can be revealing to find that so many others are involved in the same problems, and to the majority of staff it can be, at the same time, salutary and stimulating to feel a sense of 'belongingness' to an extensive service.

Those students who are at Castle Priory for any length of time are encouraged to participate in as wide a variety of leisure activities as their time tables will allow. This is not only because many of these occupations can be used, or adapted for use, with handicapped children or adults, and wide interests and practised skills are useful in this respect, but also because we firmly believe that fit and lively staff in any kind of establishment make more inspiring companions and more enthusiastic leaders for their groups of residents. Therefore at week-ends they have camped, they have canoed, some have learned or have practised their swimming, some have been instructed in the skills of archery, and have been introduced to the art of brass rubbing. Experiment with a wide range of materials—clay, paint, paper, expanded polystyrene, have been encouraged by a teacher from the local school, and the first attempts at film making resulted in the award of first place in a town competition. Local interests are fostered, and the students have, on several occasions, visited such organisations as young wives' groups, or church gatherings, about their work in the Society. A knowledge of Wallingford itself is encouraged by the inclusion of some lectures on local history, and

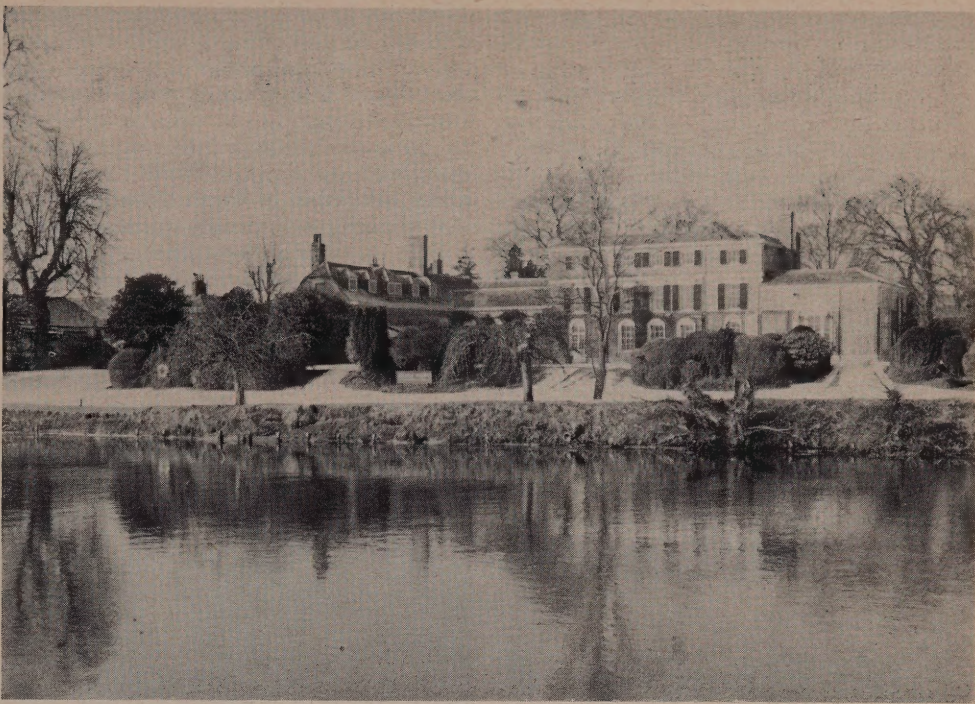
we hope that, in these various ways, the students will forge links for their successors and form happy associations within the area for themselves.

The college is beginning to build up its own library, and it is hoped that eventually this will not only contain a large range of books, but that information on published articles, films, teaching aids, etc., will be readily available.

One doubts that the first year in the life of any new establishment is completed without its troubles—it is in the overcoming of these that staff relationships are tested and the directions of subsequent progress established. The building was opened to students at the very worst season of the year, it was cold and damp, having been unused for some time, and a great deal of 'sorting out' of furniture and equipment was necessary before normal routines could be established, but with hard work and goodwill on the part of both staff and students, there were remarkable advances in both the standard of comfort and general atmosphere within a very short time. As to the academic content of the programmes, there will be modifications where experience has shown that courses were too long, or too short—too intense or too simple, and knowledge of which categories of staff are more readily available at week-ends, or during holiday periods will help in the planning of future programmes.

The small size of the present college in some ways restricts social activities within the college itself, and the fact that there are no students in permanent residence creates the intangible problem of establishing continuity and building up traditions. There is in this respect, the added problem that the students who come are of a variety of ages, professions, social backgrounds and interests. In this environment, therefore, we must be prepared to offer an atmosphere in which those who are engaged in the practical tasks of care and training will be as much at home as those working in administrative or research positions.

In any establishment where people from many districts and organisations come together, there is inevitably a spreading of viewpoints, ideas and news. It is important for the future development of the college that this should be so, and that provision for such exchanges be made both in the content of courses and in extra-curricular activities. In some ways this is bound to bring members of the Society's staff closer together, but will simultaneously draw attention to some pieces of information which are less worthy of note. These excursions into the privacy of establishments are part of the price which must be paid for the extension of knowledge. One can only hope that our students will be sufficiently mature to discard what is irrelevant or frivolous, and that the fusion of the college loyalties with the aims of the Society will produce greater areas of understanding and a new concentration of purpose for all concerned.



Castle Priory College, Wallingford, Berks

Future Plans

WE HOPE to continue to expand during the current year. Courses may be limited in size for a time, and as the houseparent students are in residence for a great part of the time, steps are being taken to organise some of the College programmes in an extra mural direction. Even when there is more accommodation it will still be advisable for some courses to be run on a regional basis, especially where part time or voluntary workers are concerned. However, it is within the next few months that patterns of training will be explored both within and outside the College.

Some of the courses, such as a week-end on the use of the Initial Teaching Alphabet with cerebrally palsied children, are meant mainly for teachers working in the Society or affiliated schools, but those offered to local authority and hospital psychologists or those for teachers in schools for the physically handicapped are intended for those working in broader fields of service, but who have contacts with spastics and are therefore interested in acquiring greater knowledge and skills. This means though, that discussions and lectures on such courses may well run into the study of adjacent fields of care. For instance, a course for teachers of the cerebrally palsied child who is also partially-sighted may be of equal interest to staff in schools for visually handicapped children.

Two of the courses for physiotherapists will have mixed groups of students—some from the Society's national staff, and some from local centres or from hospital employment. One course, especially for the care staff from local group centres is in preparation, and one to be run for adult centre staff who can-

not be released to visit Wallingford, will be provided on a regional basis.

The prospects of offering courses for those engaged in voluntary work with spastics are currently being explored. It is hoped that those working as family visitors can come together to discuss some of the problems with which they are faced so that, through them, greater support and the most up-to-date knowledge can be passed on to parents and families, both in relation to specific difficulties and on several problems of upbringing, care and occupation. For those engaged in the administration of local group affairs we hope to be able to offer a comprehensive service in the exchange of information by bringing them together either to Wallingford or within their regions, so that they can be kept abreast of new developments, and can, in return, suggest improvements in services generally. It is thereby hoped that the mingling of staff and voluntary workers—especially those working in comparative isolation—will lead to a more complete understanding of the whole situation and, at the same time, bring forward into a fair perspective, patterns of difficulty which merit full support, though they may arise within highly specialised fields of work or from remote geographical areas.

This, then is the task of the College within the Society, and within the greater framework of general services to the handicapped. Obviously there must be an academic approach to some of its responsibilities, but this is vain and superficial if it cannot also create a tradition of practical service and support to those who are already actively engaged in working for spastics, whatsoever their roles may be.

SOME TEN YEARS ago the Ministry of Education said, 'We are by no means sure that there are sufficient children with cerebral palsy needing and able to benefit from a grammar school education'. Less than 20 years ago Ministries and doctors were saying that virtually nothing could be done to train the minds of bodies of cerebral palsied, or as they are commonly known spastic, children.

It is true that *so far* only very small progress has been made to help these children physically, but mentally, and because of this emotionally, much has been achieved in the

All this has now happened, despite the early doubts, because of the faith of parents and others who believed that behind the shattered bodies of spastic children could be good minds: the courage, perseverance and faith of qualified teachers have helped to carry out these beliefs.

The Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge (built and maintained by the Spastics Society) has 83 pupils between the ages of 11 and 20. It is the only comprehensive school of its kind in Britain and has a teaching staff of 15, the majority of whom are Honours

A Successful Comprehensive School with a Difference



by Therese Appleby

past ten years and inevitably much more will be possible in the years ahead.

Spastics are people in whom a small part of the brain controlling movement is damaged or has failed to develop. The areas affected can be sight and spatial conception, hearing, or face and vocal muscles; limbs may jerk at random or be completely paralysed. Occasionally the damage is not confined to one area but spills over into several areas of the brain so that the subject may have multiple disabilities, sometimes slight, sometimes severe.

But very often these damaged bodies have minds and brains waiting to be tapped. Under the right conditions the tapping can result in releasing a bud that flowers and bears fruit, the fruit of learning, and success in O and A levels, the basis for careers or, for the severely handicapped, educated, cultured minds that will help them more easily to bear what might otherwise be years of emptiness and frustration.

Graduates. Examinations are taken in French, German, Latin, History, English, Maths, Physics, Mechanical Drawing and Art. Pupils are divided into A and B streams although, at the moment, not more than 25 per cent of them are in the A stream.

With such a large staff for so few pupils it would seem surprising if examination results were not high: against this academic advantage must be weighed the disabilities of the pupils. Last year 24 of them took O level in two, three or four subjects and five A level in one to three subjects. One pupil who passed O level in three subjects and gained over 90 per cent in French, took ten consecutive hours, using her only movable finger on one hand, to type each paper—she has virtually no speech.

Time, the frustrating factor against which teachers, pupils and houseparents work, is the only concession made by the examiners for the Cambridge University Local Examinations.

Text reprinted by courtesy of the Times Educational Supplement

Each pupil has a different timetable incorporating not only lessons but physiotherapy, speech therapy and physical education (as in a modified gym.). The time is sometimes taken up by operations which, during childhood and adolescence, interfere with education.

It is against these difficulties that both teachers and pupils work. In the smaller and therefore more tutorial A level classes, absences may not be quite so time-consuming: in the larger O level classes, timing, reorganisation and longer working hours are necessary for both teachers and pupils. Lessons may have to be given during evening prep. and homework done in the daytime.

Individual methods have been devised to fill knowledge gaps in the minds of spastic adolescents. The gaps may be the result of their physical handicaps—partially or completely paralysed hands unable to make notes, speech defects preventing the asking of questions, or lack of muscular control and the inability to turn the pages of a book (one boy has ripped dozens of books to shreds). They are also caused because physical handicaps have deprived these pupils of normal contact with simple, everyday things. To overcome this additional handicap the teacher must be aware of this lack of knowledge and clarify phrases and expressions.

In both O and A level English classes the teacher was reading the works to the pupils—Keats' 'Lamia' and Macbeth—taking small sections at a time and discussing phrases that would have been self-explanatory to students who had had more contact with the world at large. Notes were taken either by a pupil who could write with facility, or by an amanuensis: the notes which, of course, form a vital part of the teaching are later duplicated and distributed to all pupils.

History, involving maps and diagrams, is more complex. Notes are handed round before the lesson begins, together with any necessary maps in which routes under discussion have been drawn.

The language master specialises in French, Latin, German, Italian and Spanish and was previously at Tonbridge School. With tremendous humour and enthusiasm, in an atmosphere of lightness and gaiety, he reads the textbooks to the pupils, stopping periodically to question them on specific points he is trying to impart—grammar, idiomatic phrases, variations of the use of certain words. After teaching at the school for seven years he says that spastic pupils are not slower than normal students in learning but slower in production. The O level oral examination presents difficulties for pupils with very little or no speech. Special arrangements have been made, in collaboration with examiners, to overcome these difficulties. The language master reads the set pieces to the pupil while the examiner is present. He purposely mispronounces words and the pupil must stop him immediately, choose from several variations, and indicate the correct pronunciation.

To overcome the obstacle of written work

necessary for the preparation of examinations is one of the Thomas Delarue School's biggest problems. Where hands are badly affected, even though the speech defect may be considerable, this is done by amanuenses, women who give their time, either free or for a small fee, over a long period, getting to know the pupil. However, more and more time is now being spent on encouraging pupils to make an effort to use typewriters. In the early stages the process can be agonising for both pupil and teacher as uncontrollable hands jerk out in an effort to reach the right key. But the typing teacher, who has previously taught in a technical school, believes that these young people must use their hands. The initial effort is almost indescribable. It appears that the finger will never hit any key, let alone the right one. Time, which could often defeat spastics, has proved in many cases that the typewriter is their only written, and sometimes their only verbal, contact with the world. The results, though slow, are quite incredible.

Pupils who are not academically minded are given a wide general education with special emphasis on arts and crafts that will not only help them to improve body and limb control but will also be useful when they leave school.

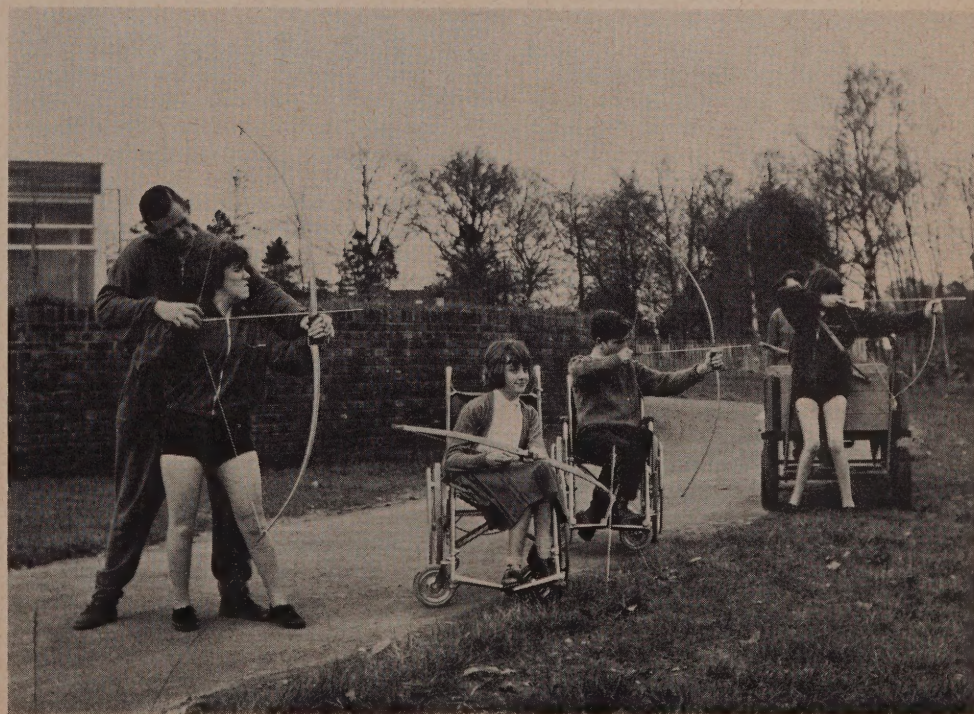
Pupils come to the school at varying ages from a variety of schools, some from the Spastics Society's own Secondary Modern Schools at Craig-y-Parc, Cardiff and Tixover Grange, Duddington, some from schools for physically handicapped children and some from normal schools. In the latter instance it appears that although many spastic chil-

dren are able to pass into grammar day schools, when they become adolescent the emotional strain of their physical handicap becomes too great and the academic side of their work suffers.

At the Thomas Delarue School there are a number of children who have either failed at examinations in their ordinary schools or who have never made any grade at all in their secondary modern school. With these children it has been proved that the specialised teaching and physical treatment available at the school can help them to pass examinations, often with high results. It may be that Education Officers and Heads of Schools are not aware that this special help is available for spastic children.

One previous student gained State and County Scholarships at the London College of Printing last year and two have places at Bristol and Canterbury Universities for October, subject to passing their final examinations this term.

Away from the staff I talked to the prefects all suffering from varying degrees of handicap. Two of them hope to go to university, one plans to become a draughtsman, and one will go into industry. Their unanimous opinion was of admiration for the work done by teachers and houseparents, together with an awareness, allied to some apprehension, of the difficulties that the future holds for them. They were all firmly confident that despite, or because of, the special care and help they have been given in the preceding years, they will be able to face the future successfully and, where necessary, independently.



It's an **L** of a Life

by
Bill
Hargreaves



Bill Hargreaves, complete with guardian angel, about to enter his long-suffering vehicle while Central London holds its breath

'It's OLD AGE creeping on doctor—and I don't bounce as easily as I did . . .'

So started my trail of adventure into the mysteries of obtaining what is officially known as an Invalid Tricycle.

My doctor was cheerfully brisk. 'Quite agree, Mr. Hargreaves, we are none of us getting any younger. Ha ha'.

'Ha ha', I replied a trifle unhappily, consoled only by the thought that I had seen many *young* spastic people driving the things.

'We must see what we can do to get you one—don't know where to start because you're the first to ask me for one.'

After a lapse of some weeks, I received a card asking me to keep an appointment with a specialist at the local hospital. This was to be The Ordeal. A medical, I thought. They weighed me, and then the gentleman saw me. He read my doctor's letter, and asked me how

far I had to walk to the nearest transport. After a few more questions he said he would notify the Ministry of Health that I should be issued with a suitable vehicle. 'A medical as to your fitness to drive will be given you by the Ministry of Health Doctor.'

Three weeks later I received a card asking me to attend the nearest appliance centre where I was seen by the doctor and lots of questions were asked and a long medical examination given. It was obvious that the Ministry was very careful to see that one was physically fit to drive. 'Your legs are useless—they couldn't control a thing', he pronounced. He then tested my arms and hands as to control and strength and made lots of notes. Blood pressure, heart and lung soundings and eyesight testing followed. After this I was taken outside to a passage and asked to climb a flight of stairs. I climbed up all right, but

was more than somewhat wobbly coming down because they were rather steep, and I noticed the doctor took two or three steps towards me in case I fell. We shook hands and parted company, he to test someone else, and I to await the next move, which was a visit from the Ministry of Health Technical Officer some three weeks later. I was handed a little slip to begin with which read that anything which might be said during the interview did not imply that I was going to receive a vehicle! This I thought was very sound, because I remember many interviews I have had when people have read the wrong things in to what I was saying. However, I was faced with a long list of questions to answer, including the distance I had to walk to the nearest transport, and all sorts of other things. Fortunately I have a garage, and the technical officer measured this to see if it was

big enough for the invalid tricycle. I was a little amused because at least four could have been fitted in my garage. I still did not know what my chances of obtaining a vehicle were particularly in view of the printed slip, and I was therefore very surprised to receive about three weeks later a form in duplicate for my signature giving me the rules and regulations about the ownership of the invalid tricycle, from which I gathered I was receiving one, although it did not say so in as many words.

Shortly afterwards I received another communication advising me that on a certain date a vehicle would be delivered to me. I was instructed by letter that on no account was I to drive it without a licence or insurance, and certainly not before I was given instruction on how to use it. I had to telephone the Local Ministry approved garage and ask them to send a man down to give me some instruction.

Eventually the car had arrived and an overalled gentleman, driving a very dilapidated invalid tricycle, came two days later proclaimed that he was from the garage to show me how to drive my vehicle.

'I'm not allowed to get in with you, but I think I'd better just go once round the block with you. Then I must get out and leave you on your own'. So once round the block it was and suddenly I found myself in charge, about to go solo.

'You'll be quite all right', he said in a kindly tone. 'All I want you to do is to go up the road, change into second gear, turn round and come back to me'.

'You're kidding!'

'No I'm not', he said. 'You have to learn to do it yourself, and it might as well be now'.

So mustering up all my self control I did as I was told, and to my complete and utter astonishment arrived back at his side in one piece, having performed all the necessary gyrations.

'There you are' he said. 'I told you you could do it'.

'It was a fluke. I couldn't do it again to save my life'.

'Yes you can' he said, tirelessly soothing. 'Just go round once more'.

Of course I couldn't do it. I finally ended up with the car half-way across the pavement, shyly nudging the garden wall.

The mechanic was not put out, he came up smiling. 'Now I will show you how to reverse out of this'. He did, and we drove to a quieter road at his suggestion and to my great peace of mind.

'Now', he said, 'I want you to turn round in a circle'. This sounded very easy in theory, but in practice it proved to be quite difficult. Have you ever had intimate contact with a lamp-post? I jolly nearly did. If the engine hadn't stalled I'd have had one inside the car with me, and how I missed it I shall never know. The mechanic said, in a careful, even voice 'that is what I call close. I think you had better leave it for today'.

'Unless I go round once more without

nearly damaging anything, I will never get inside the car again,' I replied. So I went round just once more to his satisfaction and my great relief.

All this took 2½ hours, and I do not know if you have ever felt like a jelly but I did then. It took several hours for me to regain my equilibrium. As he bid me *au revoir* his last words were, 'Get plenty of practice, particularly in traffic, and I will come and see you again in a week'.

'Not on your life', I replied, 'I am not going in any traffic until I can control this vehicle to my satisfaction'. His nerve nearly broke at the end. 'Of course you know', he said, 'I am not a Driving Instructor. I am merely here to show you how to work it!'

My spare time during the ensuing week was spent starting and stopping the car in my own road until I could change gear, and go forward or reverse and turn. There were many complaints about the noise of my engine, and I kept saying, it was not me making the noise, and that they should blame the engine and not me.

On the following Monday instructor No. 2 came up, and I explained that everyone was complaining that I was making a lot of noise. When he looked at the engine he said, 'Good gracious, they've forgotten to put oil in the chain case and gear box. No wonder it's making a noise.' I pointed out that my indicators didn't work either, and please could he renew those. So the car was taken away and brought back with oil in it, plus some spare parts which had to be fitted because of excessive wear caused by no oil.

Lesson No. 2 began with me doing left-hand turns like mad, because I didn't want to know about right-hand ones! However, with courage in both hands, I finally made my first right-hand turn and from then on I continued practicing.

A few days later I decided to take my first trip into the City, only to find to my utter and complete consternation and also to the complete frustration of all the motorists on my tail, that my gear lever got well and truly stuck at every traffic light I came up to.

I telephoned the garage again and finally the mechanic called and said that the clutch was out of adjustment. It was at this time that I noticed some nuts and bolts on the floor of the car, and found that these came from the door lock, which was about to fall off!

I looked forward to an era of trouble-free motoring. I felt that somehow my luck had to change, surely everyone didn't go through all this. I had, of course, heard about the trials and tribulations of ordinary mortals, with ordinary cars brand new from the makers, but I held the opinion that they would never allow these difficulties in a car issued to a handicapped person. Surely, I thought, nothing else can go wrong now—and so I motored cheerfully off to the office.

I carefully parked, and was walking away from it when somebody said, 'Excuse me, but there is oil or something underneath your car'. Upon investigation there was in fact oil

dripping from what appeared to be the gear box. That lunch-time I took it to a garage who told me that many different things could be causing the problem but as it was their lunch time they couldn't do anything about it. I explained that it was my lunch time too, and I too was finding difficulty in doing anything about it, but if they thought it was safe I would get back to work in it.

The following morning I decided to see whether there were any loose nuts that needed tightening that I could do myself, only to find a great flood of petrol. Yes, on top of everything else the petrol tank was leaking.

That was a fortnight ago. Since then the car has been conveyed away on a transporter and brought back better than new. I hope!

There are several points I would like to make. Firstly I have at all times met with the utmost solicitude and consideration from all the doctors, Ministry of Health officials and garage proprietors. It is most certainly not their fault that these problems occurred.

The main criticism I have to make is in two parts.

Firstly, I do not think it is right by any standards to allow a disabled person to drive unaccompanied until he or she is proved to be a safe and efficient driver, and that instead of issuing the vehicle direct, there should be a practice ground where the disabled person could practice with somebody beside him until proficiency in handling the vehicle is achieved. After that there should be a system whereby a driving instructor stands by and gives instructions under traffic conditions.

I know, because I was offered it, that one can have the services of the Advanced Motoring Association, but this does not obviate the fact that the disabled person is allowed to drive unaccompanied before he is proficient. That I am now considered to be safe, and feel safe, is due entirely to being very careful, and not venturing into any traffic at all until I knew I could handle the vehicle safely.

The second criticism is that surely the works end should be so organised to prevent human error making it possible for a machine to be issued to a disabled person in the state in which mine was received, with not one fault but many.

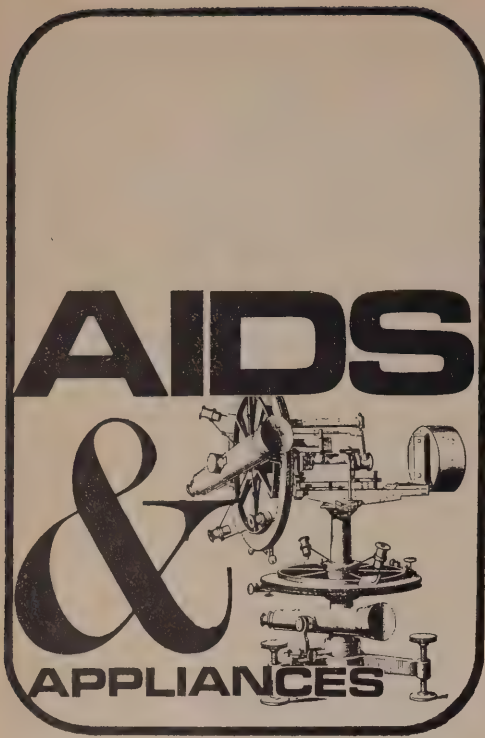
On second thoughts, why not supply a Guardian Angel instead!

* * *

Unexpected Hazard

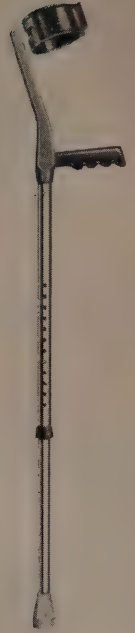
Commenting to the press on the recent arrest of a spastic driver, Mr. Hargreaves said: 'Being taken for a drunk is, I am afraid, one of the natural hazards of being a spastic.'

'But these "disabled driver" signs on the car should be sufficient warning to a constable to be careful before making an arrest. The trouble is that there is too much ignorance of the effects of this disability.'



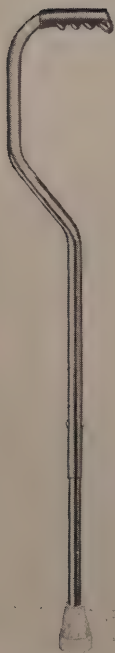
London Crutch

Walking sticks and crutches can, of course, be got at hospitals on prescription from the Ministry of Health, but for those who want to go it alone, Zimmer Orthopaedic Limited, 176 Brompton Road, London, S.W.3, have produced this London Crutch with a plastic spacer ring designed to reduce the clatter which adjustable crutches often make. It costs £3 15s. 0d. and weighs 4½ lb. per pair



Swiss Walking Stick

Carters Ltd., 65 Wigmore Street, London, W.1, are now marketing this Swiss lightweight walking stick. It is adjustable from 29½ in. to 38½ in., and weighs 14 oz., and costs £1. The idea of the design is to get the weight of the hand directly over the supporting tube



Safety-Walk

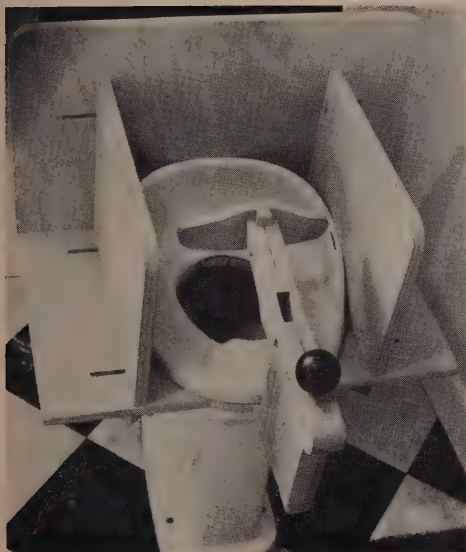
Safety-Walk is a non-slip surfacing which is self-adhesive and can be stuck down on to almost any material. It is like rough sand-paper and it is completely impossible to slip a weight-bearing shoe across it. It is manufactured in black, green and red, ¾ in. by 24 in. stairway strips, 48 pieces in a box costs 60s. 3d. Alternatively, more can be

obtained from a 1 in. roll of 96 ft. costing 68s. 1d. You can also get it in brick or tile sizes, or in 'Walkway cleats' (as shown in the photograph) from the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co Ltd., 3M House, Wigmore Street, London, W.1. Smaller quantities, that is less than 48 pieces or rolls less than 96 ft., can be obtained from Fletcher and Newman, Shelton House, Shelton Street, London, W.C.2

Medic-Bath

This bath made by Medic-Bath Limited, Monsall Street, Manchester 9, comes in two models, the Mark I, shown with a woman stepping into the bath with the narrower waterproof door and the step-over height of 6in., costs 65 guineas. The Mark II, shown with a model sitting in the bath with a wide waterproof door and step-over height of 3in., costs 75 guineas. The doors slide in and are pressure sealed by a hand pump and are very effective. Both units are built of fibre glass, and as an extra a mechanical pump can be fitted for 18 guineas.

P.S.—If the telephone rings, please remember to let the water out before opening the door!



Velcro

'Velcro can be seen below being used at Coombe Farm to keep the feet in position on an Everest and Jennings Ministry Wheelchair.'

I am sometimes asked for 'stick together' tape by people who are making special clothes for the disabled. The name of this tape is Velcro and costs 3d. an inch. For those who have not come across this before, I can best describe it as an idea stolen from the burr that fastens to one's clothes on a country ramble. There are two tapes, one that has hooks and the other that has loops. When pushed together, they remain solidly welded specially to any lateral pull.

However, the tapes can be separated by peeling one layer from the other.

Some of the best uses for Velcro are on a spastic's shirt or blouse in place of buttons. Made up ties or neck cravats can be safely held in place using Velcro.

The Disabled Living Activities Group, 39 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, have been studying these problems over the past year and they are willing to advise parents on designing these clothes and in suggesting where and what seams in a garment can best be fitted with Velcro to give the maximum independence to a handicapped person. If you write to them, they ask that you should send them very full details of the extent of the spastic's handicap.

The design depends so much on this.

Velcro can be obtained from any haberdashery store—but remember to ask for an illustrated leaflet on its uses as these stores are provided with these leaflets by the manufacturers

Adjustable Toilet Seat

This adjustable toilet seat, sent in by Mrs. Collins of Newbury, was designed for her daughter by her brother-in-law, Mr. Keith Collins. As well as being adjustable in width, it has a new feature, the adjustable front piece. This is easily removable and with a couple of turns on the knob, it slides out to the front. Mr. Collins has offered to get the plans printed, and I can send you his address if any parent would like plans on how to make it



Memories — Grave and Gay

by H. B. Davies, M.B.E., B.Sc(Econ), formerly Headmaster, Thomas Delarue School

THE PRESENT-DAY controversy about Comprehensive Schools brings to my mind the concern felt in the years before the last war when the recommendations of the Hadow Report began to be put into effect. This was the report which led to the decapitation of the then all-age Elementary Schools by transferring all children over eleven years of age to Secondary Schools, a move the pros and cons of which are still argued, especially the eleven-plus tests.

Certainly in the more rural areas much was lost in continuity and example, in stability and standards when the senior children were whisked off daily to some strange urban or central Secondary School. It was while serving in my first headship that I came to realise the status of the village schoolmaster, and the influence he could exert for good or ill, not only on his pupils, but on the whole community.

In 1931 I returned to teaching after some years in industry. When I became headmaster of an overcrowded all-age school in a large Kentish village, which enjoyed the inestimable advantages of an adjoining and extensive military playing field, of which we had unlimited use, and a virtually private beach only 50 yards from our doors. This first headship taught me a very great deal.

Here I spent five very happy, very full years, playing many parts beyond that of schoolmaster, including those of clerk to the Parish Council, organist and choirmaster of the Parish Church, leader of the Youth Club I founded, instructor to adult keep-fit classes, and acting generally as guide, counsellor and friend to all and sundry. In short I was the Village Oracle! As confidence in me grew among these rather reserved folks the problems I was faced with multiplied in number and variety, some grave and serious, some amusing, especially in retrospect. One of my earliest and difficult cases arose when a soldier and his wife sought admission for their 12-year-old daughter, who had been criminally assaulted by another soldier, and who was in a very disturbed and insecure state, not helped by the odd chance that she was the very intelligent child of two dull and ignorant parents. However, despite a total lack in those days of expert psychiatric advice, and not without many very difficult 'scenes' for me, this girl gradually recovered her self-confidence and control as the painful memories receded and were overlaid by happier experi-

ences. She joined my youth club, my choir and my evening institute, and after some years as a stenographer joined the army, and when last I heard of her had become a sergeant.

I recall the young man of 20 who called one evening asking if I would teach him to read. He had completely failed at school but now desired most anxiously to read the football results in the sporting papers. This had brought home to me, with startling emphasis, the concept of reading readiness, for despite his earlier dismal failure, in three months he was reading well.

Then there was the young welder who called to ask me to teach him how and to give him a formula to find the volume of a circular tank as he was leaving shortly to erect oil tanks under contract in Persia; now it was an elderly couple who desired me to help them make their wills and witness their signatures; now the wealthy farmer who could neither read nor write yet supplied pedigree cereal seed to the great seed firms and who wished me to witness his mark, after explaining to him the conditions of sale of some land he was selling to a great oil company and in the presence of the company's agent.

From May to October, whenever the tide fitted, all my pupils over seven went down to our beach to learn to swim, and I still smile when I remember the puzzled frown on the face of H.M. Inspector when a boy came to me to announce that the tide would be full in an hour and had they better be moving! Following my explanation, he laughed, asked me to just carry on as usual, joined us on the beach and later warmly praised the idea. Yes, H.M. Inspectors were generally our friends even in those far-off days. This reminds me of the first inspector to visit me, who didn't know my predecessor had retired. When learning my name he abruptly remarked, 'What! Another of 'em! Huh! The principal exports of Wales, teachers and preachers!' He was a Yorkshireman and good sort really.

My house was the sick-bay if any child became unwell in school, and my wife the nurse. More than once she opened the door to catch the fainting girl or receive the vomit on the doorstep! Thinking it would do one girl good to work outside in the fresh air for a while, my wife invited her to weed our herbaceous border. She was bitterly to regret her inspiration. When, later, she went to see how her patient was she found the whole border picked

clean, with nothing remaining, neither weeds nor flowers!

What wonderful times we had putting on shows in the Church Hall! One year we did Dickens' Christmas Carol and a hilarious memory of that play concerns the goose that Scrooge gave to Bob Cratchit's family. This was made by my wife and me by moulding mashed potato over a wire mesh frame and then baking it. When the family sat to eat the Christmas dinner on the stage we could not, despite frantic, whispered urgings from the wings, persuade the young imps to get on with the play until they'd eaten all the 'goose' and the pudding a parent had given, while the audience rocked with laughter, and we were covered with embarrassment!

Another year we had a scene in a pantomime in which a group of boys dressed as matelots were to sing sea shanties, and we were at a loss for proper sailors' caps. Providentially just a week before our show a naval stores barge from Deptford ran aground in a storm on our beach, and spilled out dozens of caps bearing the legend, 'H.M.S. *President*'. We did not lack beachcombers! Payment could be said to have been made when my school captain swam out in a subsequent storm and brought ashore another drifting naval barge laden with valuable stores, and received the thanks of and a gift of money from 'My Lords Commissioners of Admiralty.'

For the stage presentation of 'Robin Hood' we denuded most of the village menfolk of their long pants, dyed them green, and sewed up the fronts to provide the jean-like dress of the foresters, gathering and drying green seagulls feathers for their headgear. What fun it all was; what goodwill and friendship were generated; what valuable lessons were learned about improvisation and managing on a shoe-string; what enthusiasm and co-operation stemmed from my wife's and my own efforts to enrich the lives of our community!

But, alas, these halcyon days had to end. As the shadow of the Hadow Reorganisation loomed, which would have removed all my seniors, with all the example and stimulus they provided for the juniors, I decided I must move on. With very mixed feelings I accepted the headship of a school already reorganised under the new scheme, which was, indirectly, to lead me into the very different sphere of Special Education, as I mentioned in my earlier article.

My new school was indeed a model for all,

and, thanks to the splendid work of my predecessor, who had died suddenly within a month of retirement, was as near perfect as could be. The staff was highly efficient and all of long-standing and I was in fact junior in age to them all; parents from all over the town competed to get their children admitted; all wore the neat school uniform. There was little scope for me and soon I was bored with it. Just two details will show the calibre of pupils and staff, apart from the academic brilliance. The school won the Kent Junior League Football Championship during my first two years, before war overwhelmed us, and also the Folk and Sword Dance Shields in three successive years at the Kent Music Festival.

I sought new interests outside school and hence my organ post, which was to lead to the young delinquent and my work with the handicapped; my part as producer to the amateur dramatic society, which I was to take to the final of the British Drama League Festival, and then, with coming of war, the inauguration and command of a squadron, an early and proud one, No. 305 of the Air Training Corps. A pretty full, exciting and rewarding life, I'm sure you will agree!

Houseparent Training Course 1966/67

APPLICATIONS are invited for the forthcoming residential training course, commencing September 1966, at Castle Priory College, Wallingford.

This is a comprehensive course covering aspects of Care and Development of both normal and handicapped children, with special reference to the cerebrally palsied, and includes both theoretical training and practical periods spent in special schools and other residential situations.

Candidates must have at least one year's full-time experience of work with children or young people, and the minimum age for consideration is 18 years for women, 21 for men.

Requests for application forms, details of grant aid and other information should be made forthwith to:—

THE TUTOR ORGANISER,
CASTLE PRIORY COLLEGE,
WALLINGFORD,
BERKS.

Teaching the Cerebral Palsied Child

Proceedings of a Study Group at Grey College, Durham, April 1965

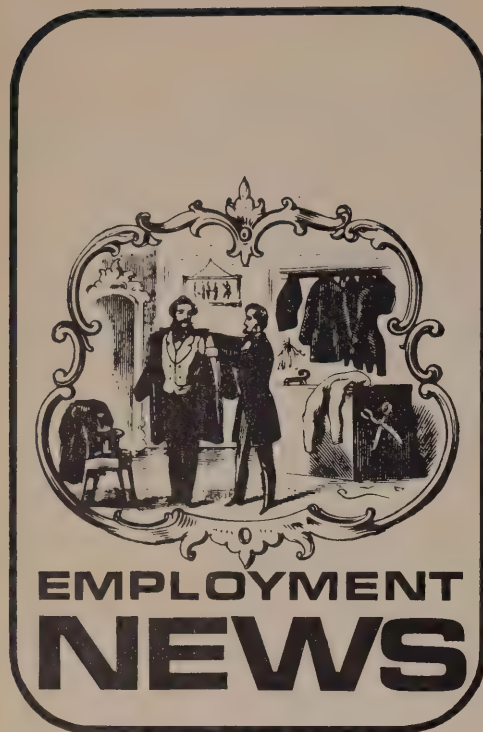
Foreword by Prof. Jack Tizard

Edited by James Loring

246 pages Figures 33 illustrations

Price 15s. (\$2.50)

**Published by The Spastics Society in
Association with William Heineman
1965**



ROBERT ARPARIS from London, has commenced work as an indoor messenger for the Tropical Products Institute in Grays Inn Road.

FRANCIS BOSHIER from Abingdon, is now working full-time in a supermarket.

MALCOLM BOTTOMLEY from Manchester, who recently completed a course of Further Education at Dene Park, is now employed as a packer for a firm of lampshade manufacturers.

SARAH BROGDEN from Lichfield, has been appointed as housemother at the Thomas Delarue School where she was formerly a pupil.

CHRISTOPHER BULLIMORE from Enfield Wash, is employed at a Co-operative dairy in Enfield. His work consists of inspection of bottles.

ALAN CAFFREY from Slough, has commenced work in the Abbey Rose Garden at Taplow.

BRENDA CARRADICE from Kendal, who completed a course of Further Education at Dene Park in September, 1964, has commenced a trial period of employment in a local stocking factory.

GRAHAM GLISTER from Slough, has commenced a six-month trial period of employment.

FRANCES HAZELHURST from Wallasey is now employed at Remploy, making candlewick bedspreads.

RICHARD HIVES from Bournemouth, has been employed as a telephonist for some time by a local firm of accountants.

ROGER HOLLAND from Croxley Green, who recently completed a course of Further Education at Dene Park, has commenced work at the Wallace Laboratory.

YVONNE LANGLEY from Broadstairs, has been doing domestic work in a local nursing home since August.

CHRISTINE LAWLESS from Newport, Mon., who trained at Sherrards, has changed her job and is working as a sewing machinist for a firm of industrial glove makers.

CAROL LAZENBY from Chesham Bois, is working for a trial period at a local nursery school where she is helping with the children.

BRIAN LESTER-SMITH from Moston, has changed his job and is employed for a trial period by Messrs. Glover Ltd., of Oldham.

ANDREW LISIKI from Islington, is working as a general clerical officer for the Greater London Council in the Architects and Civic Design Department.

JOHN LLEWELLYN from Birmingham, who trained at Sherrards, has commenced a trial period of employment in Smethwick as a trainee mechanical assembler.

IAN MURRAY from Danbury, who recently completed a course of Further Education at Dene Park, is employed in a small local factory where his work consists of stapling handles on to plastic cosmetic trays.

YVONNE MURTAGH from London, who trained at the Chester Office Training Centre, is doing clerical work in the Counting House Sales Ledger Department of a Kensington store.

RAYMOND NORRIS from Brixton, is working as a trainee compositor for Messrs. Wiggins Teape in the city.

MARJORIE PERFITT from Enfield, has changed her job and is now working for a local engineering firm.

JOHN SLANE from Preston, is working at Remploy.

KEVIN SENIOR from Dewsbury, who is waiting to commence a course of Further Education at Dene Park, has started work at the Wallace Laboratory.

RICHARD SLEGG from Sandown, I.O.W., is now working as a trainee accounts clerk and is also taking an Ordinary National Certificate Course in business at Highbury Technical College in Portsmouth.

RICHARD VIVIAN from London, has been working for some time as a laundry hand in a local laundry.

Death

It is with regret that we record the death as the result of a motor accident, of John Henry Tyler, who was, for several years, Chairman of the Medway Towns Branch of The Spastics Society.

Spastic School Leavers

A Survey of 54 London Spastics who left school between the years 1957 & 1962

A record, over a period of years,
of what happens to a known
group of Spastic school-leavers

Price 5s 0d

Published by:

The Spastics Society
12, Park Crescent
London W.1

Christmas Seals Appeal



Major Martin and his staff coping with the flood of Christmas mail

THE PACKING of Seals wallets started on 1st May and went on right through the summer and autumn, finishing in mid-November. At the end no less than 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ million wallets had been prepared for distribution, and packed away in 5,800 mail bags. The complete load weighed over 100 tons. Major Martin and Mr. Cumplen, the Society's Secretary, were faced with an enormous storage problem which was only solved by using every available inch of space in offices and passageways.

It is too early yet to estimate, with any confidence, how successful we will be this year. The fact that, for the first time, we have stressed that the Seals are a *gift* has reduced the number of complaints from people who felt that they were being 'forced' to give a donation. Some people do not like receiving Seals wallets. Last year we had about 1,800 letters of protest but on the other hand some 40,000 people asked for extra wallets. From these figures it is clear that this method of giving to charity must surely be popular with a large section of the community.

Again for the first time, we have linked the appeal with a specific target. We have made it clear that all donations will go towards the

running costs of our Research Unit at Guy's Hospital. This Unit is, in effect, seeking to make life safer for the children of tomorrow, and there is no doubt that many people are happy to support such an ideal.

We have also stressed the importance of every donation however small, reminding the public of the story of the widow's mite. By the beginning of December over 140,000 people had responded to our Christmas Seals appeal, and donations are now being received at the rate of about 3,500 a day. Gifts range

from £100 collected by the children of a secondary school, down to 6d. sent in by an old age pensioner.

Eighteen ladies, many of them working part-time, have been employed on the appeal since the spring. To begin with they were packing wallets ready for dispatch, and now they are collecting and sorting the daily flood of donations. They work long hours at a job that is often monotonous, yet this same team of helpers has come back year after year to work under Major Martin.



Roger Crosby and Norman Ogle, both spastics, made short work of the twin Beacons at The Travellers Inn at Stanley, Yorkshire. Roger and Norman are members of the Leeds and District Spastics Society. The push tumbled £57 10s. 0d. into the blanket and Mr. Stanley Smith, the licensee, hopes his customers will start another Beacon soon

(Photo: Courtesy Wakefield Express Series)



SLOW MOTION

Chapter XI

by Ann Pearce

EACH morning a telephone call went through to the hospital enquiring after mum's health. For several days the news wasn't encouraging, her condition remained unchanged and I felt very depressed but I tried to pull myself together and told myself I mustn't get disheartened. It wasn't helping anyone if I went around miserable; this was my burden and with God's help I could carry it. Towards the end of the week there was a little improvement which raised my hopes, but even so she was still very ill. A few weeks later I was able to visit her and once again, as we approached the hospital, I was worried as to how I would find her. Would the stroke have done permanent damage? Would she recognise me? What a relief when I found such an improvement. Our visit was of necessity short as mum wasn't strong enough to talk, but at least I could see her on the road to recovery.

The weeks passed and still my mother was in hospital. We didn't know for how long, and I was concerned not only with her illness but how the family were coping. Once again I felt the frustration I had experienced during my father's illness. If only I wasn't handicapped I would be able to take my place in our home, but wishful thinking is a waste of time and these things must be accepted.

As soon as mum was able to write I received my weekly letter again. What a joy that was. I realised what a wonderful recovery she was making, knowing that, in some cases, years passed before the body regained its normal strength and faculties. I continued writing to her as often as I could, taking great care not mention anything that would worry her.

October came and our autumn break. I was in two minds whether to take advantage of this or to stay behind at Coombe Farm in case mum should want me, but she had got along so well that I decided to spend this week with a school friend in Manchester. I felt it would be a good thing to have a complete break to release the tension of every day living and then feel fresh for a new start.

Although Christmas, 1962, would soon be with us I had to accept the possibility of not being able to spend the holiday at home with the family. It was bad enough having to face Christmas without dad being at home without my mother being absent as well. I knew that, although my mother had made a miraculous

recovery this time, one of these days I would have to face life without her, but just now that seemed too much to bear. However, my mother was able to go home on Christmas eve and spend Christmas with the boys but I was unable to be there. Although, physically, I could cope with myself I knew my mother couldn't stand the strain of watching me struggle and trying to make myself understood by people who couldn't understand me as well as she could, but the knowledge that she was at last fit enough to be at home made it easier for me to spend my Christmas elsewhere. I know everyone likes their family around them at this time and I rather hoped that one of my relations would invite me but they didn't, and although I know I could have shared Christmas with our residents who go to a very nice hotel for the holiday I didn't really want to do this, especially as it was my first Christmas away from home. One very special friend of mine is Rosemary Tandy who was my schoolteacher, we have always kept in close contact and as often as possible spend a day out together. On our next day out I decided to mention this to her. I felt it was a bit of a cheek really although our relationship is such that we understand each other. I had been thinking all the week of how I would approach the subject, but didn't get around to it until just before we went to lunch. I was determined to get this settled first or I wouldn't enjoy my meal. To my pleasure Rosemary was delighted to have me spend Christmas with her and her family. I think she anticipated my question and had nearly put it herself. This settled, we had a very nice lunch.

I hoped it would be possible for me to visit Hove sometime during the holiday and, once again, Rosemary came to the rescue and got in first with her suggestion. The first few days of the holiday were spent in London and from there, two days before Christmas, we drove to Hove to visit the family. It was lovely to be home and have Sunday lunch together even if my visit was for a few hours only instead of the couple of weeks I had hoped for. We exchanged our presents with solemn promises they were not to be opened until Christmas day. Then we went on to the hospital. John came along too, to show us the way. He had visited mum every day of her illness on his bike. As we approached I could see mum waving to us from the

window and John carried me from the car just as dad used to do. It was wonderful to see her looking so well, we stayed as long as we could then drove on again to Colchester to Rosemary's family where we were spending the rest of the Christmas holiday.

So now I have reached the final chapter, although at my age one might say my life is just beginning. When I think of what I have achieved during my childhood and adolescence I sometimes wonder what other people see in me. When I look in the mirror I see a face, but when other people look at me they see the person behind the face. I enjoy being praised for what I have done but try to remember the saying that one should never be content with what has been achieved but be ready to move on and cope with the next difficulty. I believe this can be done and a greater independence achieved through faith. Perhaps I might even be able to walk one of these days, we read of miracles in the Bible, so why not now.

This story which has taken me seven years to complete has, I hope, given a picture of the early years of a spastic's life. Perhaps it will be of some encouragement to other spastics, and to those who come into contact with us the assurance that we would like to be treated as ordinary people and not looked upon as oddities. I believe we were all created on this earth for a purpose, and to prove this we must make life as pleasant as possible for everyone and so prove that this is equally true of disabled people.

I thank God for my life and trust Him that He will care for me and guide me through the remainder of my life as He has done the past 21 years.

THE END.

East Anglian Notes

Reprinted from a recent Regional News Sheet

Your Group

1. ARE YOU DOING ALL YOU CAN FOR LOCAL SPASTICS?
2. DO YOU KNOW ALL OF THEM?
3. ARE YOU *REALLY* TRYING TO GET TO KNOW THEM?

There is no easy way to find spastics, it is a case of going out and asking, looking, and then looking and asking again. Particularly older spastics whose parents are resigned to the fact that no one is interested in their problems, or cares. But we do, and we must show them that we do. You could start by sending a Christmas card from your group to all spastics known to you—and why not call round to see them during the Festive Season?

Cambridge Group Forum

The Cambridge group recently organised an 'Open Discussion' evening at which all members were invited to put questions to a panel consisting of a paediatrician, a disablement resettlement officer, a physiotherapist and a mother of a spastic child, with the Regional Officer as Chairman. This proved to be most successful and quite a lot of useful

items were discussed and many interesting questions posed. It was generally agreed that this type of evening was far better than arranging for just one speaker, as the audience could choose their own subjects for discussion, and as the press had been invited, an excellent follow up appeared in the local newspaper subsequently. Other groups are recommended to consider this as an excellent way to attract parents of spastics to a meeting where they can learn something to help them with their particular problem. It is sometimes said that parents want an evening's entertainment and that the local group should provide a 'Social Evening'—perhaps—but it can also be argued that if parents do want entertainment then they will go elsewhere—cinema, bingo or what have you. Surely what is expected of a spastic group or society is assistance with a very difficult problem? Apparently it would appear so from the reaction at Cambridge.

The Younger Generation

We are used to hearing about exorbitant costs relating to National and Group Projects running into thousands of pounds—some-

times hundreds of thousands—but every now and again the odd item in newspapers crops up enabling us to maintain a sense of proportion and balance, or a donation is received and reported by the Honorary Treasurer to a group meeting. Recently the Regional Officer received 12s. 4d. from three youngsters 9-10-years-old—to help 'the spastics'. They had collected it by asking for 'a penny for the guy'. (The fact that the letters on the cheese box used for collecting purposes were very similar to 'R.S.P.C.A.', apparently had nothing to do with it!—unless, of course, it had been used before!)—Or £6 given to the Norwich Group Secretary as a result of a jumble sale held at the home of one of the three young girls who organised it. These events are not given much publicity, but they do show that our children do care for 'those less fortunate than themselves'. As in all cases they think up these schemes themselves. Also the Youth Club that provided 72 members (leather jackets, brass studs—the lot!)—at an evening meeting to see a film about spastic children, when for six weeks the event had been advertised as—'spastics film only—no social activities this evening'.



Fashions for Funds

'WITH IT' fashions at a coffee morning and fashion show recently held at the home of Mrs. V. M. Burn, wife of the Society's Hon. Treasurer, raised £50 for the Croydon and District Spastics Society.



Star Gossip

On 6th December I went to the Stars' Ball at Grosvenor House, which was once again lit by hundreds of candles, and the number of Stars attending made it a very glittering occasion. The Countess of Westmorland proposed the loyal toast which was followed by a wonderful speech from Donald Houston who was introduced by the Chairman, David Jacobs.

The Tombola was again organised by Vera Lynn who had managed to collect together 1,500 prizes and raised over £1,700.

The raffle for the Mini Minor was drawn by Mr. Edward Heath and the winner was Mr. Peter Cadbury.

The Lady's Watch by Bulova, was won by Diane Hart. The Gentleman's Bulova Watch and the transistor radio were won by guests at one of the tables at the Ball. The Raleigh Bicycle was won by R. J. Beaton, of 20 Houlton Road, Poole.

Danny La Rue, with his entire show from his club, appeared in the cabaret, and guests danced until 3 a.m. to Bob Sharples band . . . a fabulous evening!

* * *

Sylvia Syms and I visited the Prince Alfred pub recently when Mr. and Mrs. Tite presented her with a cheque for £44 13s. 6d. from their beacon and a beautiful flower obtained from Covent Garden that morning. After a very pleasant but hurried visit we drove on to The General Havlock where we were met by Mr. and Mrs. Forbes who introduced Sylvia to their customers. Sylvia pushed over their beacon on which £84 10s. had been collected. Sylvia served the customers in the bar and we left the pub just before closing time.

* * *



Leader of the Whitehall Laughter Gang

A YORKSHIREMAN from Cottingham, who decided it might be a good idea to run farces at both ends of Whitehall! He set up in opposition to the Houses of Parliament in 1950 and the electorate still rush to the theatre to put their 'X' on the Box Office plan! Brian first acted at the age of 17, and went down the mines at Doncaster during the war. When he came up again for a breath of fresh air, he decided to go into theatrical management. Elspet Gray walked into his office one day for an audition and practically walked out again, Mrs. Rix! After losing a considerable amount of cash running repertory companies, he decided to try his luck in the West End with 'Reluctant Heroes'—it clicked and so did his style of comedy. So much so, that in over 15 years it has been necessary for him only to present five farces. In all this time he has appeared in every conceivable part and every conceivable costume—a man about town, a gormless Yorkshire lad, an Irishman, a Frenchman, and in the current 'Chase Me Comrade!' he is called upon to impersonate two naval commanders and a ballet dancer! Finding himself at a loose end for some of the 24 hours of each day, he branched out into television and films. To date he has presented and starred in over 50 television comedies and several films.

In 1955 Brian was invited to a meeting of the Stars' Organisation for Spastics and it was not very long before this charity recognised his business acumen and promoted him to Treasurer. 'Looking after the brass' became Brian's speciality for five years. Another



More S.O.S. members at the United Charities Fair: right to left: a customer, Sheila Stewart, Avril Angers, Vera Lynn and Pat Jacobs

step up the ladder and he became Chairman of the S.O.S. for two years. It was whilst he was in office that the 'Wakes Hall' project commenced. Now he has passed over the top rung of the ladder and for the past two years has been a Vice-President. His work for spastics is only one of his numerous charity interests, for he is Chairman of the Special Functions Committee of the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children. The League of Friends of Normansfield, which does a great deal to assist and provide additional comforts for mentally handicapped children resident at the Normansfield Hospital, has a rather personal interest for Brian and over the past nine years he and Elspet have run the Annual Ball which is the main fund-raising event for the League. In short, when the audience is chasing off for an intermission drink during 'Chase Me Comrade!', Brian is more often than not chasing up to his dressing room to make a quick telephone call and chasing somebody else for charity funds.

PATRICK CARGILL was telling me that there is a scene in 'Say Who You Are', at Her Majesty's, where Ian Carmichael throws a letter into a waste-paper basket some 18 feet away. Or he tries to.

Only once, in the tour of nine weeks, did Ian get the letter into the basket.

Then the rest of the Company, Dilys Laye, Jan Holden and Patrick Cargill, with the understudies, said that every time Ian 'hit the bull's-eye' they would each contribute 2s. 6d. to the Stars' Organisation for Spastics.



S.O.S. at the United Charities Fair: Ron Goodwin with Pierre Picton the clown

This week he did it again and told the audience about it after the show. They also contributed and stumped up to the tune of £22. Now Ian is practising hitting the bull's-eye every night.

* * *

Mr. Wally Pope, who is a well-known pigeon fancier of the Canning Town Racing Club, held a pigeon auction at Berwick Road, Custom House. I went to the auction with Peter Murray who started off the proceedings by auctioning a pair of birds from the Royal Loft at Sandringham.

* * *

The TV. Travellers Cricket Team are now joining forces with the S.O.S. and will be playing many cricket matches next year under their Chairman, Christopher Trace, who I am sure you will have seen many times on B.B.C. Television in 'Blue Peter'.

* * *

Mr. Derrick De Marney, who is organising the raffle at the Ball, asked me to call in at The Palace Theatre where Eunice Gayson, who is appearing in 'The Sound of Music', had undertaken to sell lots of raffle tickets.

Aubrey Woods, who plays Fagin in 'Oliver', at The New Theatre, was also selling tickets fast and furiously.

* * *

Stella Moray rushed to the Porchester Hall in Paddington after the curtain came down at the Lyric Theatre where she is appearing in 'Robert and Elizabeth', to meet Mr. Spooner of the Torbay Chalet Hotel who was holding his camp's annual reunion. Stella was held up in the traffic but arrived at the hall in time to receive a beautiful bouquet of chrysanthemums and to accept a cheque for £180 for spastics. The total amount collected by this holiday camp organisation is £482.

* * *



The tombola team at the S.O.S. Ball: left to right: Jean Aubrey, Elspet Gray, Gaie Sharples, Maudie Edwards, Jean Crowther, Sheila Stapleton, Vera Lynn, Sheila Stewart, Diane Hart, Sylvia Syms, Peggy Cummins

Sailing South — Holiday Cruise

LISBON: *Prince Henry the Navigator's Monument*



on the *Queen Elizabeth*. The ship's medical staff were readily available and all set to give any help that might be needed. They were surprised at the determination of our party who joined in everything, some in spite of sticks and wobbly legs. At times the ship heaved and rolled and other passengers and crew would stand by to give a hand if it was wanted. The Shipping Company had made arrangements at each port for our group to have a special coach which would pull up at the very foot of the gangway to take us on the excursions. This was V.I.P. treatment.

Every day provided new experiences, from a shoe-shine in a Spanish back street to the thrill of a coach drive over the high Sierra Nevada Mountains of Southern Spain to see the beautiful gardens and Moorish palaces of the Alhambra. As it was thought that the eight-hours coach ride to Granada might be too much for some, an alternative tour around Malaga was laid on—just for us. This included a visit to the local bull ring which none of the other passengers had time to see. Shopping excursions were fun but there is always the problem of what to take home for friends and relations; so much to choose from

—baskets and leather goods, bull-fighting posters, beautiful embroidered linen and dolls of all shapes and sizes dressed in the national costume. One of the warmest days was spent at Estoril, one of Europe's exclusive holiday playgrounds. The rough sandy beach was difficult to manage for some but was worth it to lie in the sun, swim and look out to sea at the ships sailing up the Tagus to the Port of Lisbon. For Robin Cole it was his first time in the sea, lying where the waves were breaking gently over him. A minor difficulty arose when he wanted to come out of the water, he found that he could not hold on to his crutches and swimming trunks at the same time!

On all British India cruises the visit to the bridge and others to various departments of the ship are part of the daily programme. There are also talks and films on the places which the ship will visit.

On the entertainment side, there is always something 'on' in the evening. There were times when a lecture room was available for the Society helpers to talk to the group. People could come or not as they pleased but we found it a useful time to sort out the

'WHAT is that spot?'

'That's a tanker passing us on the starboard bow'—

'—and that little one up there?'

'Probably a fishing boat, have a look outside, it's about five miles away'.

We were on the bridge of S.S. *Devonia* and these particular spots were on the radar screen. The Officer of the Watch was explaining the various pieces of equipment and navigational aids to a crowd of young spastics who had braved spray and a strong wind climbing up to see over the bridge. Just our luck to have one of the roughest days for this!

It all started more than a year ago. There have been two or three Assessment Course Cruises and it was suggested that the Society should organise a holiday on one of British India's school ships. Why not? No tests or trials, purely a holiday, the same as anyone else could take. Everyone would pay their own fares or be sponsored by their local Group. They would be ordinary passengers among several hundred others. We had hoped that there would be room for us to go on the maiden voyage of the newly-converted *Nevasa*, but that was not possible. With the help and advice of the shipping company's officials, Cruise 120 was chosen. So *Devonia* it was, and we could not have been better cared-for



A game of deck hockey

*Messrs. Hargreaves and Cole
on the boat deck*

muddling business of foreign money or rehearse our 'spot' in the ship's concert. This was a great success and Robin Cole had the audience calling for more after his rich West Country singing of 'Old MacDonald had a Farm', complete with animal noises, and backed by a chorus of the others. One of the highlights among various evening entertainments was a fancy dress parade. Michael La Touche and Roger Reeve managed to acquire an enormous pair of bloomers and, with one leg for each of them, paraded as a pair of Siamese twins. Susan Foster carried off a handsome prize for her original idea of going as 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning' with one leg in pyjamas and hair in curlers on one side, and skirt and blouse on the other. Groucho Marx appeared pacing around the deck and was soon recognised as Mr. Elwes, one of The Spastic Society's helpers. And who on earth was that chap in his dressing gown and a night cap? None other than Mr. Hargreaves. These are just a few incidents and everyone of The Spastic Society group of 18

young people will have their own special memories.

Since returning from the cruise passengers of our party and parents have written saying what an experience it has been 'To mingle with others, be completely accepted and make new friends in all walks of life'. In mixing freely with all passengers on an equal footing new independence has been found.

This year the cruise is earlier. (See advertisement below). The Shipping Company's choice of cruise last year was so successful that we have decided to take—on their recommendation—a party on S.S. *Navasa*, to Madiera, Tangier and Lisbon. This will be for adults who will have cabin class accommodation, probably three in each cabin. School parties will be aboard but the Society's group will be treated as individual adults. All the amenities, free excursions and optional extra outings (more places of interest or perhaps a nightclub) will be available and one of the highlights of the cruise will be a tour of the famous Kasbah in Tangier.

Stop Press

See also cruise advertisement for Under-21s in dormitory accommodation.

BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY CRUISE NOW

Cruise for Lightly-Handicapped Adults

MADIERA, TANGIER, LISBON

B.I. 10 S.S. NAVASA

Sailing 14th April from Southampton
Return 26th April to Southampton

£65 0. 0.

All accommodation in cabin class, 3 berth cabins.
Free excursions include a visit to the Kasbah and
tours of Madiera and Lisbon.

Cruise for Lightly-Handicapped Under 21s

OSLO, COPENHAGEN, HELIGOLAND

B.I. 137 S.S. DUNERA

Sailing 24th May from Tilbury
Return 3rd June to Tilbury

£33 0. 0.

All accommodation — bunks in dormitories. Free
Excursions in all ports: Tivoli Gardens and 'Little
Mermaid' in Copenhagen, a regatta in Kristiansand
Bay, return via Kiel Canal.

IMPORTANT NOTE ALL APPLICANTS FOR CRUISES MUST BE ABLE TO WALK UNAIDED, MANAGE STEEP GANGWAYS IN POSSIBLE ROUGH WEATHER AND BE INDEPENDENT FOR PERSONAL NEEDS. THE SPASTICS SOCIETY WILL PROVIDE HELPERS ON EACH CRUISE.

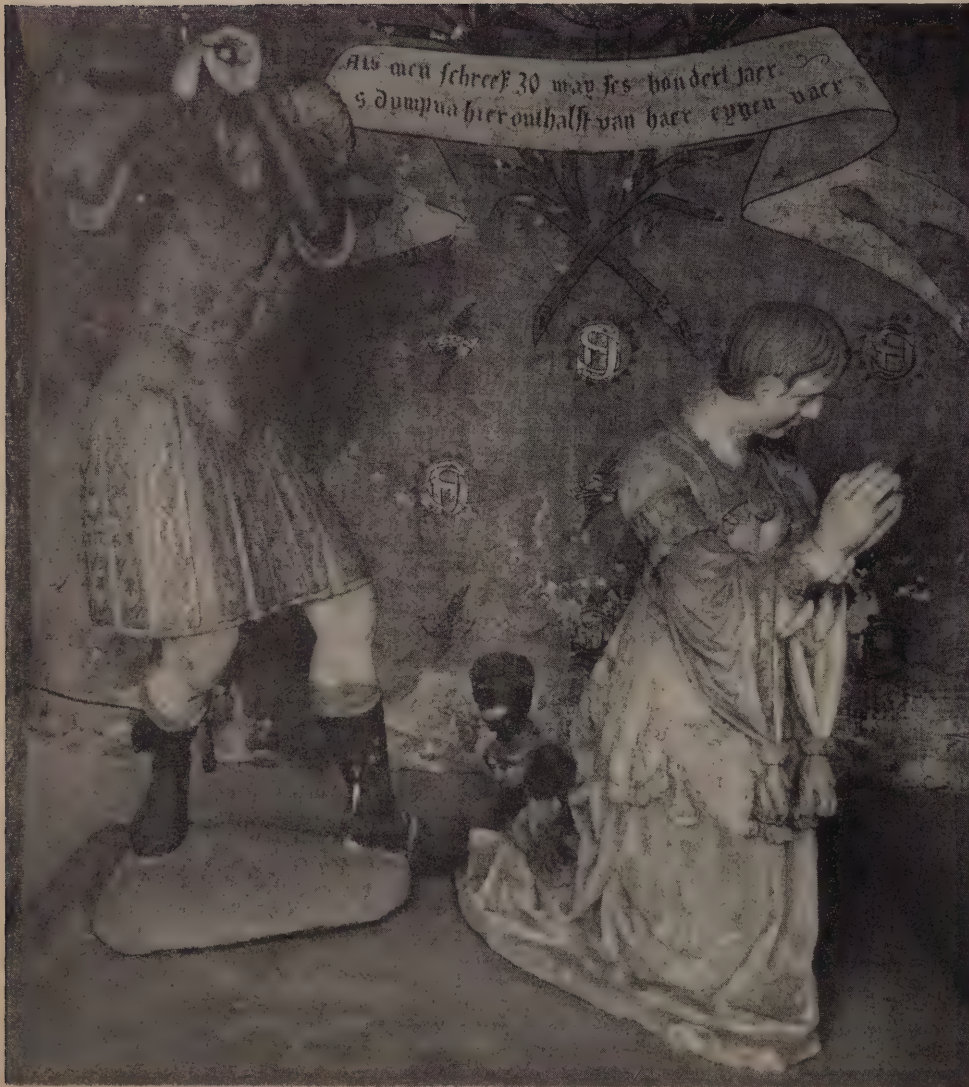
Applications should be addressed to: The Holiday Organiser, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W.1.

The Tender Legacy of Dymphna

The martyrdom of a young Irish princess by her own father has left a strange and wonderful tradition in the Belgian town of Geel where 3,000 mental patients live and work with the townspeople. GEORGE BRUCE tells the story of 1,400 years of kindness.

(Reprinted by permission of the Weekend Telegraph)

This shrine at Geel depicts the event which began the little town's long association with the mentally sick. The Irish Princess Dymphna kneels in prayer as her insane father prepares to kill her for refusing to marry him



DRIVE THROUGH Geel and you notice nothing unusual. It is a quiet little Flemish town about 30 miles from Antwerp, with an 11th-century church, a central square with hotels and cafés, and streets that straggle away from it into the flat green countryside.

But sit down at one of the cafés. A young man with brilliant but troubled eyes may stop at your table and talk excitedly to you for a few minutes in voluble Flemish. He suddenly raises his hat, smiles and walks swiftly away.

Before you have time to wonder, a smartly dressed girl with long black hair crosses the square towards you. But as she approaches you observe something strange about her. Gradually she walks more slowly, until only a few yards away she stops and stands as rigid as a statue. On her pretty face there is a look of anguish.

Waiters arrange chairs and tables; mothers pass by pushing prams; two policemen chat on a corner. Why, you wonder, is everybody so unconcerned? Doesn't the girl need help? You turn to the waiter. He shrugs and smiles. 'Ca va M'sieur,' he says quietly. 'C'est une malade.' It hardly seems a proper explanation. Three minutes pass. The girl then stirs slightly, seemingly struggling to emerge from her stupor, to be aware of life again. She manages, and with a nervous smile walks slowly from the square.

Watching her you feel a sense of tragedy, and you look around more closely. You soon see other solitary figures, men and women, wandering through the square. They are in turn intent and pre-occupied, or laughing softly to themselves, or troubled and gloomy, or singing in bold voices and waving as if to admiring crowds. No ordinary Flemish town, this.

Geel is in fact unique. It is a miracle that it ever happened at all. Some 5,000 families live in and around it, employed in farming, shop-keeping, a little light industry and the Euro-chemic nuclear establishment at nearby Mol.

Some 3,000 mentally sick people live here also, as members of these families. They include both the chronically feeble-minded, and men and women with every kind of mental disorder: paranoiacs, schizophrenics, manic depressives. In most countries they would either be under lock and key or dosed with sedative and tranquillising drugs and closely guarded. Apart from the fairly limited help of occupational therapy, they would suffer the ill-effects of idleness and the inevitable contagion of mental sickness.



This girl was overcome by an incurable mental disease while studying at University. Now, trapped in a perennial childhood, she lives with a sympathetic Belgian family at Geel

of the same social status as the patient. And those from the country are placed perhaps on farms; those from towns as far possible in Geel itself.

The rate of payment to families for the rare and demanding service they perform is from £5 to £12 10s. a week—depending on the standard of the home—for full board, including a private room for the patient. There may not be more than one other patient in the house; both must be of the same sex and may never be treated as servants. Hardly the cost of board is covered by this small sum today. Under the kindness, tolerance and respect shown to them by the Geeloeses, the mentally sick can retain a sense of personal dignity and perhaps find happiness.

The townsfolk are following a custom that destiny has bequeathed them. An official in the local municipality told me: 'As children we grew used to mental people among us, so did our fathers and their fathers for centuries back. We didn't choose this vocation of caring for them in our own homes, but we go on doing it and it has become second nature to us.'

The tradition goes back to the 6th century. Dymphna, a princess and the Christian daughter of a pagan Irish king whose queen had died, fled her home to escape her father's incestuous wish to marry her. With her father confessor Gerebern, she arrived in Antwerp, and hid in a monastery near the hamlet of Geel.

Agents of the king, who had himself set out after his daughter, discovered her hiding place. Soon, the king, with a band of soldiers, burst into the room where she and the priest were hiding. The soldiers slew Gerebern at the king's command. When, on her knees before him, Dymphna solemnly vowed never to marry him, he drew his sword and struck off her head.

News of Dymphna's martyrdom spread throughout Europe and pilgrims flocked to the tomb of the princess, said to have resisted to the point of death the demands of a king possessed by the devil. Soon it began to be rumoured that people possessed of devils—as the mad were then thought to be—were miraculously cured when praying there.

Throughout Europe at this time, the mad were hunted, branded and fettered, or baited like bears for public amusement. But in Geel they came to be thought sick and sometimes curable. So many mentally ill people came to

visit Dymphna's tomb that the monks built an annexe where they could wait before walking in procession to her tomb. And when this proved too small, villagers offered their homes.

In this way, a tradition grew that war, famine, prejudice and contempt could not stop. The Geeloeses, through the generations, became accustomed to caring for mentally disturbed people. And gradually, the concept of family therapy emerged and was extended.

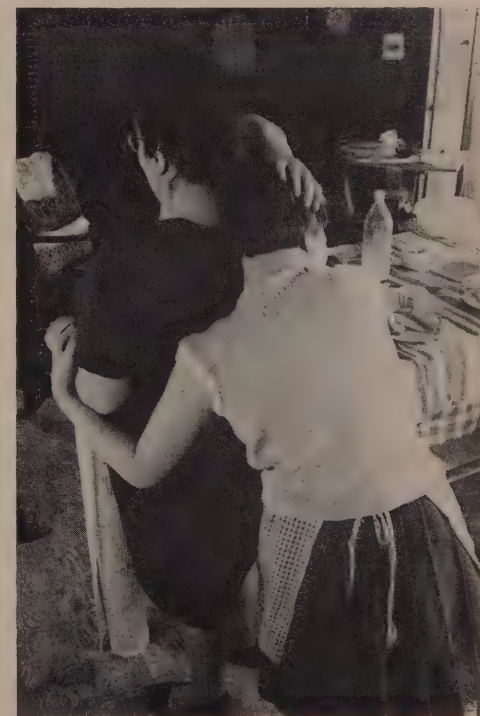
Many patients spend their entire lives with one family, notably the feeble-minded, for whom there is no known cure. They work if they can and are as happy as it is possible for them to be. Other patients, suffering from mental disorders arising from strain and stress, stay briefly at Geel, relax in its tolerant environment and go back able to cope with their normal lives. All depends upon the nature and degree of the mental disorder.

Would family therapy work in other countries? Could it even be started today? 'I doubt if our system could ever succeed elsewhere,' a spokesman for the committee responsible for family placement told me. 'Religion gave the initial impetus here centuries ago. Today this is lacking.'

'But if for any reason Geel ever ceased to care for mental cases—and I cannot think of one—the town would never be the same for us. They are a part of our lives. It's our destiny to care for them. Even at school our children are taught the saying—"Only kind hearts can cure sick minds."'

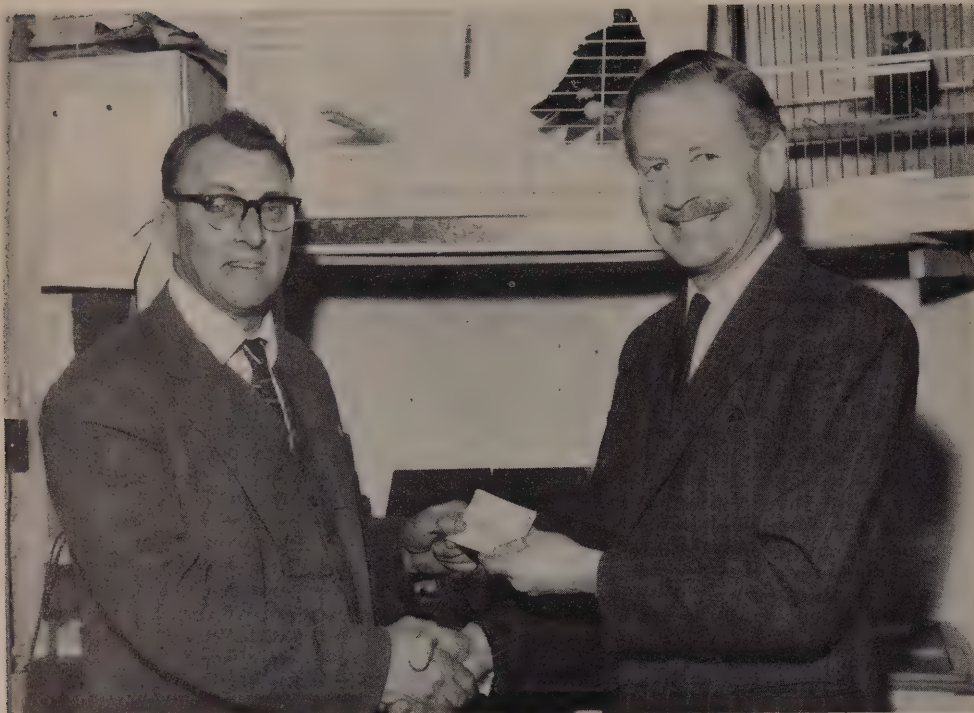
'People from other Belgian towns come here and say—"It wouldn't work with us. How do you do it? You must be mad."'

The Geeloeses smile as they listen to these incredulous visitors. They know by experience that the gap between the sane and the insane is always narrow, and today more so than ever.



A young girl hugging the foster-mother with whom she lives typifies the way a family environment helps mental patients find a kind of happiness

Who'll Give Me Ten?



Mr. Wally Pope presents Mr. Peter Haigh, Appeals Director, with a cheque for £700 14s. 6d.

'WHO'LL GIVE ME TEN?' The auctioneer raised his hammer and heads nodded almost imperceptibly. As he lowered it at 25, only the flutter of wings broke the silence of the large, packed hall.

We might have been at Sotheby's, so keen was the interest, so expert the auctioneering.

But we were in the East End of London, at The Working Men's Club and Institute. The auctioneer was Wally Pope who keeps a pet shop in Plaistow and is probably best known as a judge at 'The People's' international pigeon show.

And he was auctioning pigeons. This time for spastics.

For weeks past he'd taken time off from his shop to make sure that the auction was a success. When he first decided, in conjunction with 'The Racing Pigeon', to hold this auction, he started drafting advertisements. And people from all over the country responded. They included a millionaire pigeon fancier, the manager of the Royal Lofts at Sandringham and a 'bus conductor.

These people gave their prized pigeons—the aristocrats of the pigeon world—in their feathers of blue, and mottled red, silver with brown bands and a multitude of greys. Over one hundred of them to help spastics!

But it wasn't only the birds that were donated. It was Wally Pope's time. Time taken from his own business. To answer

letters. Collect the pigeons from the station. Take them to the hall. Feed them. Catalogue them. Ticket them.

For days on end he kept at it. And then on Saturday evening he auctioned them. It took him nearly five hours.

From all over the country people came to bid. People of every age and every income group. From the North of England, the Midlands, Darlington and Wales. As Wally Pope said, pigeon fanciers can no longer be regarded as the cloth cap and muffler class. Racing pigeons attract people from every walk of life.

And such is the integrity of people in the pigeon world that bids were made—just on the reputation of the fanciers who had given them—for birds that had not yet arrived.

Even disc jockey Peter Murray, took time off from his busy life to open the auction and try his hand at auctioneering.

It was all done for charity. For spastics who need all the help they can get.

Warm-hearted Wally Pope collected over £700 on Saturday night and he gave it all to The Spastics Society.

And then, he went back to put in several twelve-hour days in his shop, to catch up on the work he'd neglected.

Mr. Pope has now decided that he will hold a pigeon auction annually in aid of The Spastics Society.

International Correspondence Service

ARE you looking for pen-friends abroad?

International Correspondence Service is a voluntary, non-commercial organisation. Its main aim is the promotion of world friendship and goodwill through personal contacts. At the same time, it helps all who wish to make friends at home or abroad, perhaps for the furtherance of some hobby such as stamp-, coin- or view-card collecting; for the mutual exchange of information and ideas: or simply to help those who are lonely or ill, at home or in hospital.

Members receive a list of pen-friends (up to about 100), from a wide range of countries; at the member's request his or her name, address and interests are included in the next list to be printed and sent out. There are two grades of members, ORDINARY and FULL. Full members receive, in addition to the privileges above, a *second* list of pen-friends after about six months, together with a news-sheet/bulletin giving particulars of Club activities and progress and, from time to time, articles, stories, poems and news of competitions for short-story writing, etc. Full members also have the right to write in at any time for personal assistance in finding extra friends in addition to those on the lists.

Separate lists are made out for the following age groups: 9-15, 14-20, 19-30, 29-40, 39-50 over 50's. There is no age limit and we have a number of members in their seventies and eighties.

The principal countries in which members are at present available are: Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Eire, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, India, Zambia, Malawi, Rhodesia, Kenya, Mauritius and British Guiana. We cannot, unfortunately, at the moment offer friends in non-English-speaking countries in Europe, but hope to do so later.

Normally subscriptions of 5s. and 10s. are payable by Ordinary and Full members respectively but membership is FREE to all spastics.

For further information write to:

D. W. KERLOGUE, Holloway, Matlock, Derbyshire, ENGLAND.



HOW THE SPASTICS HAVE HELPED ME

Dear Editor,

I am a normal young mother with two small children and you may think it strange for me to be writing this letter. A year ago my second child was born and after the birth I developed severe nervous depression and self-pity.

About three months after the baby was born it was suggested to me, by a very good friend of the Society, could we possibly have a spastic girl to live with us. My husband and I thought it over and decided to give it a try so she came to live with us and gave me the biggest lesson of my life. She taught me how to speak to others more handicapped than herself. I have in the past, before I was married, helped a little bit to raise money but I realise now that I did not know fully just what being a spastic meant. To me it means courage, cheerfulness and a determination to succeed.

I have read Ann Pearson's 'Slow Motion' in the SPASTICS NEWS and I am very impressed. It makes me feel inadequate that I cannot do as much as I want to do. I have visited

A LETTER FROM THE CAPTAIN OF THE 'DEVONIA'

I am delighted to know that all members of the spastic group on cruise 120 enjoyed their holiday and benefited from the services we could provide as well as meeting so many other people.

We in our turn were most impressed by the good humour, resilience and determination to overcome all their handicaps. It was a most moving experience to meet so many fine young people.

Your kind remarks have been passed on to all my ship's company. Both they and I look forward to meeting you all again on some future occasion.

Yours sincerely,

F. A. J. DOWNER,

Captain, D.S.C., R.D., R.N.R. (Retd.)

Coombe Farm on several occasions and chatted to anybody who had no visitors on that particular day, and lent books round the centre. They are a happy and cheerful lot and it is a pleasure to go and see them. I am often in and out of Bramley Hill Work Centre, for one reason and another, where the same cheerful atmosphere is to be found.

It is only due to my husband's co-operation that I have been able to get out while he baby-sits but he helps whenever he can. I now spend most of my time suggesting ways of raising money to various people, who, I hope will forgive me for worrying them when they are overworked already.

I want to thank you all for bringing me back to life; for giving me an interest, and for the pleasure of your company.

Yours sincerely,

ELIZABETH (LIZ) ROBSON.

27 St. Peter's Road,
Croydon, Surrey.

PEN FRIENDS WANTED

Dear Editor,

I wonder if you could help me to find a European pen-friend. I am 16 and my hobbies are stamp collecting and scouting.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN WILKES,

Dene Park Further Education Centre,
Shipbourne Road,
Tonbridge, Kent.

Dear Editor,

I wonder if you could help me to find a boy pen-friend. I am 24 years old and my hobbies are church work and I collect records.

Yours sincerely,

AVRIL CULVERWELL,
1 Gaston Road,
Mitcham, Surrey.

Dear Editor,

Will you please put my name and address in your SPASTICS NEWS for a pen-friend girl of about 18 years so that we can write to each other. My hobbies are watching football, cinema or going out to different places of interest. I shall be 18 years old in April.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE TAMPIN,
12 Newhouse Close,
New Malden,
Surrey.

'Beau-Gesture'—a Letter Addressed to Vera Lynn

Dear Miss Lynn,

My wife, Terry, and I have great pleasure in forwarding the enclosed cheque for £25 as a further donation to the Beacon Club of The Spastics Society.

This was derived from the sale of a darling black poodle puppy, sired by our dog, Beau-Beau, who is very well-bred and who took great pleasure in giving his service for such a worthy cause.

If you know of any lady black miniature poodles, in fairly close proximity to here, who might be ready for similar attention, Beau-Beau would be happy to oblige for a fee of 5 guineas, to be donated to the same charity, a proviso being that we should have the pick of the litter, to be disposed of to realise a further donation.

I am,

Very cordially,
HARRY JACKSON,
The Chepstow,
39 Chepstow Place,
London, W.2.

YOU NEVER CAN TELL

Dear Editor,

Owing to my letter being published in the July issue of the SPASTICS NEWS, I wish to inform you that I am getting married on the 4th December.

Thanking you once again for all your help.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL DENNER,
Elm Cottage,
Blindley Heath,
Lingfield, Surrey.

Congratulations and best wishes to you both.—Ed.

PLASTIC PANTS

*PLASTIC PANTS suitable for adults
(slight seconds)*

Clearance price, unrepeatable

2/- per pair

State waist size

C.W.O. please

BIMBO PRODUCTS, 84 BURY ROAD,
HARLOW, Essex

Action Stations

by Ernest Barnes

STANDING on platform twelve of Liverpool Street Station, feeling very satisfied after a wonderful evening at the Victoria Palace Theatre, I fell to thinking how much, and yet how little, this great station had changed since my first visit at the age of eleven, 36 years ago. Gone is the hiss of steam blowing through safety-valves, which to me is the greatest music in the world, gone is the loud chu-cha as regulator handles were pushed open, and the screaming of spinning driving wheels fighting for a grip on the metal road, and then the slow beat as the regulators were shut and then opened slowly. I used to feel my pulse beating faster and faster as the great monster pushed up her load of metal and humanity.

Since the death of steam, trains, to me, no longer have any soul or personality, and are no longer anything but a means of transport, drivers are no longer drivers, they are not dirty, they carry no oil-cans or oily waste, they wear clean white shirts and sit in comfortable seats. The platform staff, however, do not change. This was made quite clear by the lady ticket-collector, who, with a subdued shout of recognition, beckoned me past the queue, and I and my three spastic companions went through the barrier.

Stations have always held the utmost fascination for me, and I always seem to get on very well with the staff, right from the station-master to the humble carriage cleaners. I think that something in me died when the station of my home town of Wells in Norfolk was closed, and it has now become a lifeless shell with weeds growing in between the rails, the rails that have witnessed nearly all the joys and sorrows of my lifetime. It is these rails that have borne me so many times through the many small stations with picturesque names, such as County School, Thuxton and Heathersett, *en route* to Norwich.

Norwich Thorpe, of course, is the station nearest to my heart after Wells. Here I know almost everyone by their Christian name, and I would say that this station is the handicapped person's Utopia, for there are no steps anywhere, even the toilets are on the level. I always like to visit the buffet bar, where I am known as Methuselah or Father Neptune. I think that Wells cockles must be a delicacy to some of the staff at Norwich, and when I first came to Prested Hall I used to fill my old chair with as many cockles as she could carry,

and distribute them amongst the very eager staff. Nowadays, however, cockles are much scarcer and more expensive, so I have to get them when I can.

It was on Norwich Thorpe that the now famous arrest took place. I was travelling to Wells a few days after the mailbag robbery by a bloke in a wheelchair, and arriving at Colchester from Kelvedon I was somewhat surprised, but not unduly disturbed, by the guard locking the wire cage (I was travelling in the brake), saying, 'I'm not taking any chances with a b——r like you.' I was disturbed, however, on arrival at Norwich to see two burly policemen waiting for me, each dangling a pair of handcuffs. I was pushed in my chair on to a barrow, and shoved along the platform amidst the shouts of porters. 'We've got him! We've got him!' There was a very large number of travellers on the station at the time, and many of them stared at me, mystified. Then they seemed to cotton on, and somebody yelled, 'Let's bail the poor sod out', and they started to throw pennies, sixpennies and two-bob bits into the footwell and box of my chair, and I eventually arrived at Wells filled with whisky as well as fresh air.

In recent years I have lost contact with Ipswich Station. It was here that I used to get a mug of hot tea on a cold winter's day, which was always very grateful and comforting. Colchester is the next station on the trek back to Prested Hall, this station is very cold in the weather sense, but very warm-hearted in every other respect. Here I am always known as the Lord Mayor of Wells.

And so we come to Kelvedon and home. The solitary porter at Kelvedon is indeed a very cheerful Charlie in more senses than one, and on a cold December day his cubby-hole with a red-hot boguey stove makes waiting for my train a pleasure. I love travelling by rail, and I always have a good stock of plausible excuses to do so, and when I eventually go to heaven or hell, as the case may be, I hope that it may be by rail.

Sherrards

News

SHERRARDS TRAINING CENTRE produced its first magazine in June 1964, and was started primarily as a training exercise for trainees in the Commercial Department giving practice in spelling and punctuation from hand written articles supplied by other trainees at Sherrards, typing and layout, stencil typing, duplicating, handling of paper in putting sheets together, stapling, embossing of plates and printing them for envelope addressing, mailing, filing, recording, and material costing, thus supplying an all round general training in simple office routine.

When the first magazine was produced we thought it would be a good idea to send a copy to each Sherrards ex-trainee inviting him or her to write an article for the magazine about job, hobby, or any subject they would like to write about, and, together with the trainees at Sherrards, to suggest a name for the magazine. We had a wonderful response and for the name of the magazine the majority said 'Sherrards News'.

After running for a year we have received many letters from ex-trainees saying how much they enjoy the magazine as it keeps them in touch with absent friends and 'It's nice to know you're not forgotten.' This, in itself, made us feel the magazine was doing a good job.

Through visitors to Sherrards, trainees, ex-trainees, and staff, 'Sherrards News' has now found its way to 17 countries as follows:—

America, Australia, Borneo, Brazil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, and now India.

We have invited people abroad to write to 'Sherrards News' and hope to print their letters in future issues.

To cover our material costs the annual subscription is 5s. (2s. 6d. for Sherrards ex-trainees) and copies sold singly are 1s. (the 6d. introductory price for the first year was found, when we produced our Annual Statement of Income and Expenditure, to be insufficient to cover rising material costs). Four issues are produced in one year in June, September, December and March.

The Editor, Mrs. Ray Dowler, Commercial Instructor, Committee Members, and all Sherrards Trainees, would like to express their gratitude and thanks to all those who have helped to make 'Sherrards News' an international interest.

SCHOOLS AND CENTRES ADDRESSES

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Pentyrch, Nr. Cardiff.
Telephone: Pentyrch 397.
Headmistress: Mrs. C. M. Kearslake.

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Starvecrow, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent.
Telephone: Tonbridge 4584.
Headmaster: G. D. C. Tudor, Esq., M.A.

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Headmistress: Miss E. M. Varty.

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Headmaster: John Nelson, Esq.

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Headmaster: R. A. Pedder, Esq.

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Warden: W. R. Barley, Esq.

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Warden: Mrs. J. P. R. Molyneaux.

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Telephone: Bexhill 1491.
Manager: G. H. Marsh, Esq.

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Warden: P. E. Habieb, Esq.

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Telephone: Wallingford 2551.
Principal and Director of Studies: Mrs. J. W. Knowles, B.A.

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Telephone: Claughton 2583.
Headmistress: Mrs. M. Collinge, B.A.

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Telephone: Eagley 230.
Headmaster: D. A. Hiles, Esq.

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Headmaster: D. D. Johnston, Esq., M.A., M.Ed.

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Headmistress: Miss M. A. Budd.

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Cumberland, Westmorland and Furness Spastics Society WORTH
Darlington and District Spastics Society H
Durham and District Spastics Society
South Shields and District Spastics Society C
Sunderland and District Spastics Society CW
Tees-side Parents and Friends of Spastics TE

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Miss O'Kelly, 145 Front St., Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham. Tel.: 2852

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Hull Group, The Friends of the Spastics Society in Hull and District H
Leeds and District Spastics Society O
Pontefract and District Spastics Association
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Shiffeld and District Spastics Society TOC
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Chester and District Spastics Association TCE
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Manchester and District Spastics Society TCE
Montgomeryshire Spastics Society
Oldham and District Spastics Society OCT
Preston and District Spastics Group OCT
Sale, Altrincham and District Spastics Society RTEC
Southport, Formby and District Spastics Soc. H
Stockport, East Cheshire and High Peak Spastics Society TEOC
Urmston and District Group TC
Warrington and District Group for the Welfare of Spastics O
Widnes Spastic Fellowship Group
Wigan and District Spastics Society

Regional Officer:

T. H. Keighley, Room 481, 4th Floor, St. James' Buildings, Oxford Street, Manchester 1. Tel.: Central 2088

Deputy Regional Officer:

F. Young, 6 King's Buildings, Chester. Tel.: 27127

Regional Social Worker:

Mrs. M. Moncaster, same address as Mr. Keighley

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Derby and District Spastics Society T
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Grimsby, Cleethorpes and District Friends of Spastics Society
Leicester and Leicestershire Spastics Society TC
Lincoln and District Spastics Society
Loughborough and District Spastics Society
Mansfield and District Friends of Spastics Group O
Newark Area Spastics Society
Northampton and County Spastics Society TE
Nottingham and District Friends of Spastics Group TEC
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Mrs. M. Lane, same address

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Shrewsbury and District Spastics Group H
Stafford and District Spastic Association T
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I. C. R. Archibald, 109 Colmore Row, Birmingham 3. Tel.: Central 3162

Acting Regional Social Worker:

Mrs. M. Hepworth, same address

Senior Welfare Officer, M.S.A. (Birmingham & Worcestershire areas):

Mrs. N. M. Barrett, 15 Victoria Road, Harborne, Birmingham 17. Tel.: Harborne 3182 and 2458

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Kenfig Hill and District Spastics Society CTO
Merthyr Tydfil and District Spastics Society
Monmouthshire Spastics Society
Pembrokeshire Spastics Society
Pontypridd and District Group
Swansea and District Spastics Assoc. TECW

Regional Officer:

B. Kingsley-Davies, 2 Saunders Road, Cardiff. Tel.: 29289

Regional Social Worker:

Miss Davey, same address

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Bristol Spastics Association CTOW
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H. G. Knight, 51 Newnham Road, Cambridge. Tel.: 61747

Regional Social Worker:

Miss H. M. Day, 51 Newnham Rd., Cambridge. Tel.: 54531

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Mr. R. Jenkinson, same address

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East Herts Group, Herts Spastics Society
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 Society
 Ilford, Romford and District Spastics Assoc. **O**
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 Reading and Berkshire Spastics Welfare Soc. **T**
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 South-West Middlesex Group
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 Society
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 Watford and District Group, Herts Spastics
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 North Surrey Group **W**
 North-West Kent Spastics Group **WO**
 North-West Surrey Group **TEOC**
 South-East Surrey Group **TOC**
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 hill, Surrey. Tel.: Redhill 63944 and 62250

Regional Social Worker:
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 North-West London Spastics Society **W**
 South-East London Group **T**
 South London Group
 South-West London and District Group

Regional Officer:
 Mrs. Patricia Latham, 28 Fitzroy Square, Lon-
 don, W.1. Tel.: EUSton 2436/7

Jersey Spastics Society
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 A. M. Frank, M.C., M.A., 12 Park Crescent,
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Development Secretary:
 D. Lancaster-Gaye, 12 Park Crescent, London,
 W.1.

Schools and Centres Secretary:
 Mrs. C. A. Clifton, 12 Park Crescent, London,
 W.1.

KEY TO LOCAL GROUPS:

T—Treatment Available
E—Education
O—Occupational Centre
W—Work Centre
H—Holiday Home
C—Child Care
R—Residential Centre

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

THE EDITOR, 'SPASTICS NEWS' 12 PARK CRESCENT, LONDON, W.1

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 subscription rate of 11s., including postage (Published monthly).

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

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